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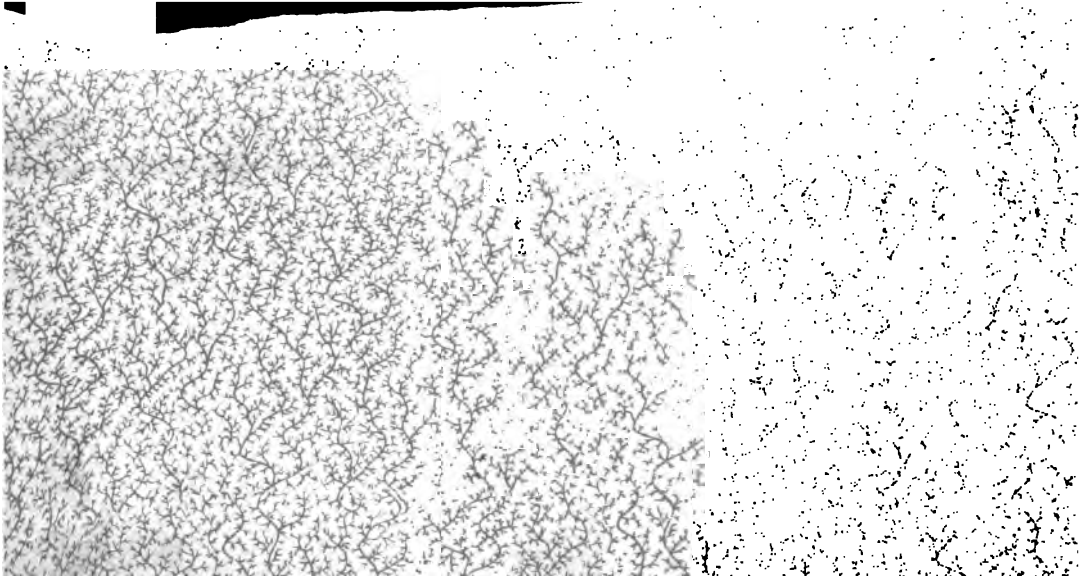

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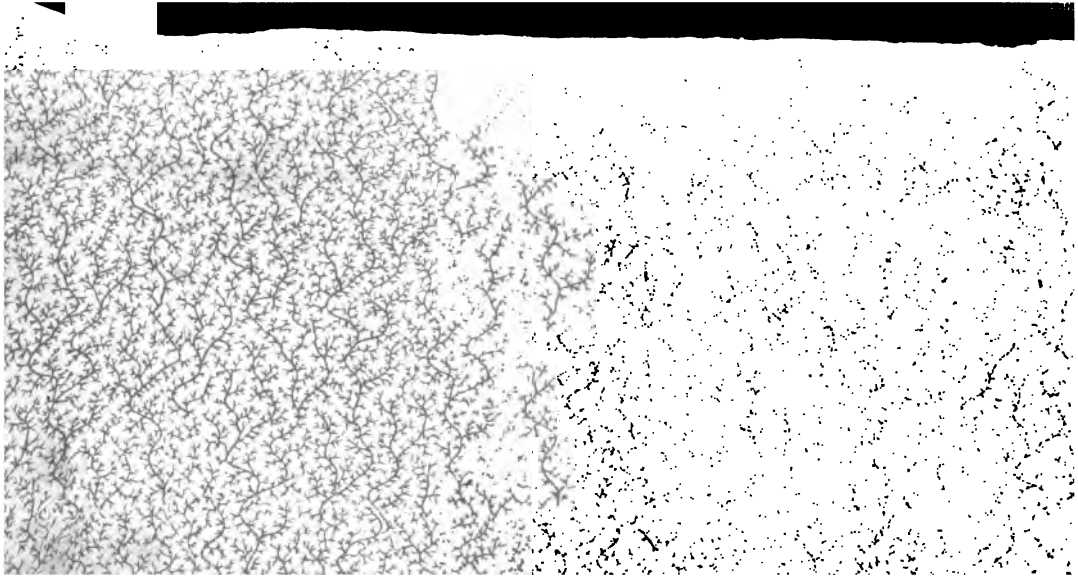

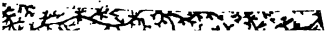

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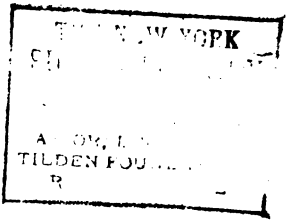
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FRANCIS BACON

Lord High Chancellor of England

Published Oct.r 20th 1803 by H. Jones

FABLES

OF

THE ANCIENTS,

IN

PHILOSOPHY, MORALITY, AND CIVIL POLICY;

ILLUSTRATED AND EXPLAINED.

BY

Francis Bacon,

BARON VERULAM, VISCOUNT ST. ALBANS,

And Lord High Chancellor of England.

A NEW EDITION.

WITH NOTES CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY,

BY DR. SHAW.

Illustrated with elegant Engravings on Wood.

London:

PRINTED BY J. CUNDEE, IVY-LANE,

FOR M. JONES, PATERNOSTER-ROW

1803.

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THE present production appears like a rich cabinet of antiques, opened and set in view. The happy talent, which the author, in his physical works, employs to interpret nature, is here employed to interpret the dark oracles of men. And to say the truth, he seems to have used the like artifice in both; proceeding according to the inductive method, delivered in the second part of the *Novum Organum*: without which, or something of the kind, it would not be easy to derive such depths of knowledge from the Enigmas, or dark parables of antiquity. For example, he first culls out his fable, with choice and judgment; then trims or prunes it, rejecting what is superfluous or spurious; next turns and views it in different lights; and at length finds out the key for decyphering it, in the most natural and advantageous manner: and thus having got the right end of the thread, the interpretation follows as it were spontaneously. Though the whole still remains to be coolly sate upon and revised; in order to discover, if the imagination has not been too busy in working off the interpretation, or if no levity, misbecoming the ancient sages, has crept in And as the author certainly bestowed this, or

perhaps much greater, diligence and application, in
ming these ancient fables, and fitting them with suitabl
terpretations, it seems but a piece of justice in the rea
that he be not over-hasty to pronounce upon the perf
ance. This is mentioned the rather, because some
thought, that the author here employed his imagina
more than his judgment. But the appeal from men's
thoughts to their second, is the privilege of every ca
writer.

THE

MYTHOLOGY

OF THE

ANCIENTS,

DECYPHERED AND EXPLAINED.

CRITIQUE

UPON THE

MYTHOLOGY OF THE ANCIENTS.

THE earliest antiquity lies buried in silence and oblivion; excepting the remains we have of it in sacred writ. This silence was succeeded by poetical fables; and these, at length, by the writings we now enjoy: so that the concealed and secret learning of the ancients, seems separated from the history and knowledge of the following ages, by a veil, or partition-wall of fables, interposing between the things that are lost, and those that remain. *

Many may imagine that I am here entering upon a work of fancy, or amusement; and design to use a poetical liberty, in explaining poetical fables. It is true, fables in general are composed of ductile matter, that may be drawn into great variety, by a witty talent, or an inventive genius: and be delivered of plausible meanings which they never contained. But this procedure has already been carried to excess: and great numbers, to procure the sanction of antiquity to their own notions and inventions, have miserably wrested and abused the fables of the ancients.

* *Varro distributes the ages of the world into three periods; viz. the unknown, the fabulous, and the historical. Of the former we have no accounts but in scripture; for the second, we must consult the ancient poets; such as Hesiod, Homer, or those who wrote still earlier; and then again come back to Ovid, who in his metamorphoses, seems in imitation, perhaps, of some ancient Greek poet, to have intended a complete collection, or a kind of continued and connected history of the fabulous age; especially with regard to changes, revolutions, or transformations.*

Nor is this only a late or unfrequent practice; but of ancient date, and common, even to this day. Thus Chrysippus, like an interpreter of dreams, attributed the opinions of the Stoics to the poets of old: and the chemists, at present, more childishly apply the poetical transformations to their experiments of the furnace. And though I have well weighed and considered all this; and thoroughly seen into the levity which the mind indulges for allegories and allusions; yet I cannot but retain a high value for the ancient mythology. And certainly, it were very injudicious to suffer the fondness and licentiousness of a few, to detract from the honour of allegory and parable in general. This would be rash, and almost prophane: for, since religion delights in such shadows and disguises; to abolish them were, in a manner, to prohibit all intercourse betwixt things divine and human.

Upon deliberate consideration, my judgment is, that a concealed instruction and allegory was originally intended in many of the ancient fables. This opinion may, in some respect, be owing to the veneration I have for antiquity; but more to observing, that some fables discover a great and evident similitude, relation and connection with the thing they signify; as well in the structure of the fable, as in the propriety of the names, whereby the persons or actors are characterized: insomuch, that no one could positively deny a sense and meaning, to be from the first intended, and purposely shadowed out in them. For who can hear, that fame after the giants were destroyed, sprung up as their posthumous sister; and not apply it to the clamour of parties, and the seditious rumours which commonly fly about for a time, upon the quelling of insurrections? Or who can read, how the giant Typhon cut out and carried away Jupiter's sinews; which*

* *See hereafter, Fab. 7.*

Mercury afterwards stole, and again restored to Jupiter; and not presently observe, that this allegory denotes strong and powerful rebellions; which cut away from kings their sinews, both of money and authority: and that the way to have them restored, is by lenity, affability, and prudent edicts; which soon reconcile, and as it were steal upon the affections of the subject? * *Or who, upon hearing that memorable expedition of the gods against the giants, when the braying of Silenus's ass greatly contributed in putting the giants to flight; does not clearly conceive, that this directly points at the monstrous enterprises of rebellious subjects; which are frequently frustrated and disappointed by vain fears and empty rumours?*

Again, the conformity and purport of the names, is frequently manifest, and self-evident. Thus Metis, the wife of Jupiter, plainly signifies counsel; Typhon, swelling; Pan, universality; Nemesis, revenge, &c. Nor is it a wonder, if sometimes a piece of history, or other things are introduced, by way of ornament; or if the times of the action are confounded; or if part of one fable be tacked to another; or if the allegory be new turned: for all this must necessarily happen; as the fables were the inventions of men who lived in different ages, and had different views; some of them being ancient, others more modern; some having an eye to natural philosophy; † *and others, to morality, or civil policy.*

It may pass for a farther indication of a concealed and secret meaning, that some of these fables are so absurd, and idle, in their narration, as to shew and proclaim an allegory, even afar off. A fable that carries probability with it, may be supposed invented for pleasure, or in imitation of history; but those that could never be conceived, or related in this way

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* *See hereafter, Fab. 8.*

† *See with regard to natural history and physics,* Dr. Hook's Discourse *of Earthquakes.*

must surely have a different use. For example, what a monstrous fiction is this, that Jupiter should take Metis to wife; and as soon as he found her pregnant, eat her up; whereby he also conceived, and out of his head brought forth Pallas armed? Certainly no mortal could, but for the sake of the moral it couches, invent such an absurd dream as this; so much out of the road of thought!

But the argument of most weight with me is this; that many of these fables, by no means appear to have been invented by the persons who relate and divulge them; whether Homer, Hesiod, or others: for if I were assured they first flowed from those later times and authors that transmit them to us, I should never expect any thing singularly great or noble from such an origin. But whoever attentively considers the thing, will find that these fables are delivered down, and related by those writers, not as matters then first invented and proposed, but as things received and embraced in earlier ages. Besides, as they are differently related by writers nearly of the same ages, it is easily perceived, that the relators drew from the common stock of ancient tradition; and varied but in point of embellishment, which is their own, And this principally raises my esteem of these fables; which I receive, not as the product of the age, or invention of the poets, but as sacred reliques, gentle whispers, and the breath of better times; that from the traditions of more ancient nations came, at length, into the flutes and trumpets of the Greeks. But, if any one shall, notwithstanding this, contend that allegories are always adventitious, or imposed upon the ancient fables, and no way native, or genuinely contained in them; we might here leave him undisturbed in that gravity of judgment he affects; (though we cannot help accounting it somewhat dull and phlegmatic) and if it were worth the trouble, proceed to another kind of argument.

Men have proposed to answer two different, and contrary ends, by the use of parable; for parables serve, as well to instruct or illustrate, as to wrap up and envelope: so that though, for the present, we drop the concealed use, and suppose the ancient fables to be vague, undeterminate things, formed for amusement; still the other use must remain, and can never be given up. And every man, of any learning, must readily allow, that this method of instructing is grave, sober, or exceedingly useful; and sometimes necessary in the sciences: as it opens an easy and familiar passage to the human understanding, in all new discoveries that are abstruse, and out of the road of vulgar opinions. Hence, in the first ages, when such inventions and conclusions of the human reason, as are now trite and common, were new and little known; all things abounded with fables, parables, similes, comparisons, and allusions; which were not intended to conceal, but to inform and teach: whilst the minds of men continued rude and unpractised in matters of subtilty and speculation; or even impatient, and in a manner uncapable of receiving such things as did not directly fall under and strike the senses. For as hieroglyphics, were in use before writing; so were parables in use before arguments. And even, to this day, if any man would let new light in upon the human understanding, and conquer prejudice, without raising contests, animosities, opposition, or disturbance, he must still go in the same path, and have recourse to the like method of allegory, metaphor, and allusion. *

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* *What use the author has made of this art, will appear to a careful reader of his* de Augmentis Scientiarum *and* Novum Organum. *And though some are of opinion that knowledge is so far improved of late, and men's minds so opened and prepared, that new discoveries, and the naked truth will be best received, when delivered in plain and simple language, without foreign art or ornament; yet he, who acts upon such a supposition,*

To conclude, the knowledge of the early ages was either great or happy; great, if they by design made this use of trope and figure; happy, if whilst they had other views, they afforded matter and occasion to such noble contemplations. Let either be the case, our pains, perhaps, will not be misemployed; whether we illustrate antiquity, or things themselves.

The like indeed has been attempted by others; but to speak ingenuously, their great and voluminous labours have almost destroyed the energy, the efficacy, and grace of the thing, whilst being unskilled in nature, and their learning no more than that of common-place, they have applied the sense of the parables to certain general and vulgar matters, without reaching to their real purport, genuine interpretation, and full depth. For myself, therefore, I expect to appear new in these common things; because, leaving untouched such as are sufficiently plain, and open, I shall drive only at those that are either deep or rich. *

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will perhaps find it erroneous; even though the subject be but of a physical, and not of a moral, political, or religious nature.

* *In effect, the author appears to have judiciously chose his fables, as they were pregnant with useful matter; yet not of the easiest kind to interpret: thus, in his usual way, setting others an example for prosecuting the thing farther; as not having himself exhausted this fruitful subject.*

PHYSICAL MYTHOLOGY.

I.

THE FABLE OF CŒLUM;

EXPLAINED OF THE CREATION, OR ORIGIN OF ALL THINGS.

THE poets relate, that Cœlum was the most ancient of all the gods; that his parts of generation were cut off by his son Saturn; that Saturn had a numerous offspring; but devoured all his sons, as soon as they were born; that Jupiter, at length, escaped the common fate; and when grown up, drove his father Saturn into Tartarus; usurped the kingdom; cut off his father's Genitals, with the same knife wherewith Saturn had dismembered Cœlum; and throwing them into the sea, thence sprung Venus.

Before Jupiter was well established in his empire, two memorable wars were made upon him; the first by the Titans, in subduing of whom, Sol, the only one of the Titans who fa-

voured Jupiter, performed him singular service. The second by the giants; who being destroyed and subdued by the thunder and arms of Jupiter, he now reigned secure.

EXPLANATION.

THIS Fable appears to be an enigmatical account of the origin of all things; not greatly differing from the philosophy afterwards embraced by Democritus, who expressly asserts the eternity of matter; but denies the eternity of the world: thereby approaching to the truth of sacred writ, which makes chaos, or un-informed matter, to exist before the six days works.

The meaning of the fable seems to be this: Cœlum denotes the concave space, or vaulted roof that incloses all matter; and Saturn the matter itself; which cuts off all power of generation from his father: as one and the same quantity of matter remains invariable in nature, without addition or diminution. * But the agitations and struggling motions of matter, first

* The original quantity of matter remaining invariably the same, explains that circumstance in the fable, of the same knife being used for the dismembering of Saturn, as *had before* been used for the dismembering of Cœlum.

produced certain imperfect and ill-joined compositions of things, as it were so many first rudiments, or essays of worlds; till, in process of time, there arose a fabric capable of preserving its form and structure. Whence the first age was shadowed out by the reign of Saturn; who, on account of the frequent dissolutions, and short durations of things, was said to devour his children. And the second age was denoted by the reign of Jupiter; who thrust, or drove those frequent and transitory changes into Tartarus; a place expressive of disorder. This place seems to be the middle space, between the lower heavens, and the internal parts of the earth; wherein disorder, imperfection, mutation, mortality, destruction, and corruption, are principally found.

Venus was not born during the former generation of things, under the reign of Saturn: for whilst discord and jar had the upper hand of concord and uniformity in the matter of the universe, a change of the entire structure was necessary. And in this manner, things were generated and destroyed, before Saturn was dismembered. But when this manner of generation ceased,* there immediately followed another,

* Viz. When Jupiter possessed the throne; or after a durable world was formed. Let the figurative or personify-

brought about by Venus, or a perfect and established harmony of things; whereby changes were wrought in the parts, whilst the universal fabric remained entire and undisturbed. Saturn, however, is said to be thrust out and dethroned, not killed, and become extinct; because agreeably to the opinion of Democritus, the world might relapse into its old confusion and disorder: which Lucretius hoped would not happen in his time.*

But now, when the world was compact, and held together by its own bulk and energy; yet there was no rest from the beginning: for first, there followed considerable motions and disturbances in the celestial regions; though so regulated and moderated by the power of the Sun, prevailing over the heavenly bodies, as to continue the world in its state. Afterwards there followed the like in the lower parts, by inundations, storms, winds, general earthquakes, &c. which, however, being subdued and kept under, there ensued a more peaceable and lasting harmony, and consent of things.

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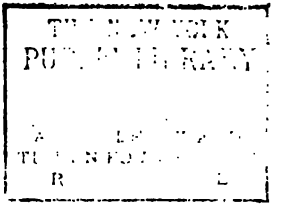
ing manner of expression, usual among the poets, be all along considered.

* "Quod procul a nobis flectas Fortuna gubernans;
"Et ratio potius, quam Res persuadeas ipsa."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It may be said of this fable, that it includes philosophy; and again, that philosophy includes the fable: for we know, by faith, that all these things are but the oracle of sense, long since ceased and decayed; but the matter and fabric of the world being justly attributed to a creator.*

II.

THE FABLE OF PROMETHEUS;

EXPLAINED OF AN OVER-RULING PROVIDENCE, AND OF HUMAN NATURE.

The ancients relate that man was the work of Prometheus, and formed of clay; only the artificer mixed in with the mass, particles taken from different animals. And being desirous to improve his workmanship, and endow, as well as create, the human race; he stole up to heaven with a bundle of birch rods, and kindling them at the chariot of the Sun, thence brought down fire to the earth, for the service of men.

They add, that for this meritorious act, Prometheus was repayed with ingratitude by man-

* Next should follow the fable of Pan, explained in the *de Augmentis Scientiarum*; for that fable seems naturally to succeed the present: as the Phenomena of the Universe, come to be considered immediately after its origin.

kind; so that, forming a conspiracy, they accused both him and his invention to Jupiter. But the matter was otherwise received, than they imagined: for the accusation proved extremely grateful to Jupiter, and the gods; insomuch, that delighted with the action, they not only indulged mankind the use of fire; but moreover conferred upon them a most acceptable and desirable present, viz. perpetual youth.

But men, foolishly overjoyed hereat, laid this present of the gods upon an ass, who, in returning back with it, being extremely thirsty, and coming to a fountain, the serpent, who was guardian thereof, would not suffer him to drink, but upon condition of receiving the burden he carried, whatever it should be. The silly ass complied; and thus the perpetual renewal of youth was, for a sup of water, transferred from men to the race of serpents.

Prometheus, not desisting from his unwarrantable practices, though now reconciled to mankind, after they were thus tricked of their present, but still continuing inveterate against Jupiter, had the boldness to attempt deceit, even in a sacrifice; and is said to have once offered up two bulls to Jupiter, but so, as in the hide of one of them, to wrap all the flesh and fat of *both, and* stuffing out the other hide only with

the bones; then in a religious and devout manner, gave Jupiter his choice of the two. Jupiter detesting this sly fraud and hypocrisy, but having thus an opportunity of punishing the offender, purposely chose the mock bull.

And now giving way to revenge, but finding he could not chastise the insolence of Prometheus, without afflicting the human race, (in the production whereof, Prometheus had strangely and insufferably prided himself,) he commanded Vulcan to form a beautiful and graceful woman; to whom every god presented a certain gift; when she was called Pandora. * They put into her hands an elegant box, containing all sorts of miseries and misfortunes: but hope was placed at the bottom of it. With this box she first goes to Prometheus, to try if she could prevail upon him to receive and open it; but he being upon his guard, warily refused the offer. Upon this refusal, she comes to his brother, Epimetheus, a man of a very different temper, who rashly and inconsiderately opens the box. When finding all kinds of miseries and misfortunes issued out of it, he grew wise too late; and with great hurry and struggle endeavoured to clap the cover on again: but with all his endeavour,

* As if it were all gift.

could scarce keep in Hope, which lay at the bottom.

Lastly, Jupiter arraigned Prometheus of many heinous crimes; as that he formerly stole fire from heaven; that he contemptuously, and deceitfully, mocked him by a sacrifice of bones; that he despised his present; * adding withal a new crime, that he attempted to ravish Pallas: for all which, he was sentenced to be bound in chains, and doomed to perpetual torments. Accordingly, by Jupiter's command, he was brought to Mount Caucasus, and there fastened to a pillar, so firmly, that he could no way stir. A vulture, or eagle stood by him, which in the day-time gnawed and consumed his liver; but in the night the wasted parts were supplied again: whence matter for his pain was never wanting.

They relate, however, that his punishment had an end; for Hercules sailing the ocean, in a cup, or pitcher, presented him by the Sun, came at length to Caucasus; shot the eagle with his arrows; and set Prometheus free. In certain nations also there were instituted particular games of the Torch, to the honour of Prometheus; in which they, who run for the prize, carried lighted torches; and as any one of these torches hap-

* Viz. that by Pandora.

pened to go out, the bearer withdrew himself, and gave way to the next; and that person was allowed to win the prize, who first brought in his lighted torch to the goal.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable contains and enforces many just and serious considerations; some whereof have been, long since, well observed; but some again remain perfectly untouched. Prometheus clearly and expressly signifies Providence; for of all the things in nature, the formation and endowment of man was singled out by the ancients, and esteemed the peculiar work of Providence. The reason hereof seems, 1. That the nature of man includes a mind and understanding, which is the seat of Providence; 2. That it is harsh and incredible, to suppose reason and mind should be raised, and drawn out of senseless and irrational principles; whence it become almost inevitable, that providence is implanted in the human mind; in conformity with, and by the direction and the design of the greater over-ruling Providence. But, 3. The principal cause is this; that man seems to be the thing, in which the whole world centers, with respect to final causes; so that if he were away, all other things would stray and fluctuate, without end or inten-

tion; or become perfectly disjoined, and out of frame. For all things are made subservient to man; and he receives use and benefit from them all. Thus the revolutions, places, and periods, of the celestial bodies, serve him for distinguishing times and seasons; and for dividing the world into different regions: the meteors afford him prognostications of the weather; the winds sail our ships, drive our mills, and move other machines; and the vegetables and animals of all kinds, either afford us matter for houses and habitations, cloathing, food, physic, or tend to ease, or delight, support, or refresh us: so that every thing in nature seems not made for itself, but for man.

And it is not without reason added, that the mass of matter, whereof man was formed, should be mixed up with particles taken from different animals, and wrought in with the clay; because, it is certain, that of all things in the universe, man is the most compounded, and recompounded body; so that the ancients not improperly styled him a Microcosm, or little world within himself. For although the chemists have absurdly, and too literally, wrested and perverted the elegance of the term microcosm, whilst they pretend to find all kind of mineral and vegetable matters, or something corresponding to them

in man; yet it remains firm and unshaken, that the human body is of all substances the most mixed, and organical: whence it has surprizing powers and faculties. For the powers of simple bodies are but few, though certain and quick; as being little broken, or weakened; and not counterballanced by mixture: But excellence, and quantity of energy, reside in mixture and composition.*

Man, however, in his first origin, seems to be a defenceless, naked creature; slow in assisting himself, and standing in need of numerous things. Prometheus, therefore, hastened to the invention of fire, which supplies and administers to nearly all human uses and necessities; insomuch, that if the soul may be called the form of forms; if the hand may be called the instrument of instruments; fire may, as properly, be called the assistant of assistants, or the helper of helps. For hence proceed numberless operations; hence all the mechanic arts; and hence infinite assistances are afforded to the sciences themselves.

The manner wherein Prometheus stole this fire, is properly described from the nature of the

* The instances of this position deserve to be collected. Consider of the mechanical powers, Medicines, poisons, plants, companies, government, arts, the advancement of philosophy, &c.

thing: he being said to have done it by applying a rod of birch, to the chariot of the Sun: for birch is used in striking and beating; which clearly denotes the generation of fire to be from the violent percussions, and collisions of bodies; whereby the matters struck are subtilized, rarified, put into motion, and so prepared to receive the heat of the celestial bodies; whence they, in a clandestine and secret manner, collect and snatch fire, as it were by stealth, from the chariot of the Sun. *

The next is a remarkable part of the fable; which represents, that men, instead of gratitude and thanks, fell into indignation and expostulation; accusing both Prometheus and his fire to Jupiter: and yet the accusation proved highly pleasing to Jupiter; so that he, for this reason, crowned these benefits of mankind, with a new bounty. Here it may seem strange, that the sin of ingratitude to a Creator and Benefactor; a sin so heinous as to include almost all others; should meet with approbation and reward. But the allegory has another view; and denotes, that the accusation and arraignment both of human na-

* See the Author's example of an enquiry into the form of heat, in the *Novum Organum* Part II. Sect. I. See also *the chapter* of fire in Boerhaave's Chemistry.

ture, and human art, among mankind, proceeds from a most noble and laudable temper of the mind; and tends to a very good purpose: whereas the contrary temper is odious to the gods; and unbeneficial in itself. For they who break into extravagant praises of human nature, and the arts in vogue, lay themselves out in admiring the things they already possess, and will needs have the sciences cultivated among them, to be thought absolutely perfect and complete; in the first place, show little regard to the Divine Nature: whilst they extol their own inventions, almost as high as his perfection. In the next place, men of this temper are unserviceable and prejudicial in life; whilst they imagine themselves already got to the top of things, and there rest, without farther enquiry. On the contrary, they who arraign and accuse both nature and arts, and are always full of complaints against them, not only preserve a more just and modest sense of mind, but are also perpetually stirred up to fresh industry, and new discoveries. Is not, then, the ignorance and fatality of mankind to be extremely pitied, whilst they remain slaves to the arrogance of a few of their own fellows; and are doatingly fond of that scrap of Grecian knowledge, the Peripatetic *philosophy;* and this to such a degree, as not

only to think all accusation or arraignment thereof useless, but even hold it suspect and dangerous? Certainly, the procedure of Empedocles, though furious; but especially that of Democritus (who with great modesty complained, that all things were abstruse; that we know nothing; that truth lies hid in deep pits; that falsehood is strangely joined and twisted along with truth, &c.) is to be preferred before the confident, assuming, and dogmatical, school of Aristotle.* Mankind are, therefore, to be admonished, that the arraignment of nature, and of art, is pleasing to the gods; and that a sharp and vehement accusation of Prometheus, though a creator, a founder, and a master, obtained new blessings and presents from the Divine Bounty; and proved more sound and serviceable than a diffusive harangue of praise and gra-

* The address of the author may here deserve to be observed. What he is forced on many occasions to stifle, or at most to speak only by halves, for fear of offending; he here openly avouches, in a manner that is scarce liable to exception. Indeed, he appears to have chose the present subject, the rather because the course and nature of decyphering the mythology of the ancients, would give him an opportunity of freely, or less offensively expressing his sentiments, for the improvement of arts and sciences, and the *general advantage* of mankind.

tulation. And let men be assured, that a fond opinion they have already acquired enough, is a principal reason why they have acquired so little. *

That the perpetual flower of youth should be the present which mankind received as a reward for their accusation, carries this moral; that the ancients seem not to have despaired of discovering methods, and remedies, for retarding old age, and prolonging the period of human life; but rather reckoned it among those things which, through sloth and want of diligent enquiry, perish and come to nothing, after having been once undertaken, than among such as are absolutely impossible, or not placed within the reach of the human power. For they signify, and intimate, from the true use of fire, and the just and strenuous accusation, and conviction of the errors of art, that the divine Bounty is not

* Certainly few appear sensible, what a number of great things are still wanting in philosophy, for the accommodation of human life; or even to prevent dreadful calamities; such as happen by fire, water, storms, &c. Things wherein men seem either quite regardless, or confounded; as if they had no faculties for procuring a command over nature in these particulars. And to examine it closely, we shall perhaps find the moral and political world subject to their calamities, no less than the physical.

wanting to men in such kind of presents, but that men indeed are wanting to themselves; and lay such an inestimable gift upon the back of a slow-paced ass: that is, upon the back of the heavy, dull, lingering thing, experience; from whose sluggish and tortoise-pace proceeds that ancient complaint of the shortness of life, and the slow advancement of arts. * And certainly it may well seem, that the two faculties of reasoning and experience, are not hitherto properly joined, and coupled together; but to be still new gifts of the gods, separately laid, the one upon the back of a light bird, or abstract philosophy; and the other upon an ass, or slow-paced practice and trial. And yet good hopes might be conceived of this ass; if it were not for his thirst, and the accidents of the way. For we judge, that if any one would constantly proceed, by a certain law and method, in the road of experience; and not by the way, thirst after such experiments as make for profit or ostentation †; nor exchange his burden, or quit the original design, for the sake of those; ‡ he

* See the Introduction to the History of Life and Death.

† See the fable of Atalanta, Fab. V.

‡ As almost the whole body of mankind, both philosophers and others, seem to have done.

might be an useful bearer of a new and accumulated divine Bounty to mankind. *

That this gift of perpetual youth should pass from men to serpents, seems added by way of ornament, and illustration to the fable; † perhaps, intimating, at the same time, the shame it is for men, that they, with their fire, and numerous arts, cannot procure to themselves those things which nature has bestowed upon many other creatures. ‡

The sudden reconciliation of Prometheus to mankind, after being disappointed of their hopes, contains a prudent and useful admonition. It points out the levity and temerity of men in new experiments; which, not presently succeeding, or answering to expectation, men precipitantly quit their new undertakings, hurry back to their old ones, and grow reconciled thereto. ||

After the fable has described the state of man, with regard to arts and intellectual matters, it

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* See the author's method of learned experience; *de Augment. Scientiar.*

† See Introduction.

‡ See the author's History of Life and Death.

|| Which is one principal reason of the slow advancement of arts.

passes on to religion: for after the inventing and settling of arts, follows the establishment of divine worship; which hypocrisy presently enters into, and corrupts. So that by the two sacrifices we have elegantly painted the person of a man truly religious, and of an hypocrite. One of these sacrifices contained the fat, or the portion of God, used for burning and incensing; thereby denoting affection and zeal, incensed up to his glory. It likewise contained the bowels, which are expressive of charity; along with the good and useful flesh. But the other contained nothing more than dry bones; which nevertheless stuffed out the hide, so as to make it resemble a fair, beautiful, and magnificent sacrifice; hereby finely denoting the external and empty rites and barren ceremonies, wherewith men burden and stuff out the divine worship: Things rather intended for show and ostentation, than conducing to piety. Nor are mankind simply content with this mock-worship of God, but also impose and father it upon him, as if he had chose and ordained it. Certainly the prophet, in the person of God, has a fine expostulation, as to this matter of choice. Is this the fasting which I have chosen, that a man should afflict his soul for a day; and bow down his head like *a bulrush?*

After thus touching the state of religion, the fable next turns to manners, and the conditions of human life. And though it be a very common, yet is it a just interpretation, that Pandora denotes the pleasures and licentiousness, which the cultivation and luxury of the arts of civil life introduce, as it were, by the instrumental efficacy of fire: whence the works of the voluptuary arts are properly attributed to Vulcan, the God of Fire. And hence infinite miseries and calamities have proceeded to the minds, the bodies, and the fortunes of men, together with a late repentance; and this not only in each man's particular, but also in kingdoms and states: for wars and tumults, and tyrannies, have all arisen from this same fountain, or box of Pandora.

It is worth observing, how beautifully, and elegantly, the fable has drawn two reigning characters in human life; and given two examples, or tablatures of them, under the persons of Prometheus, and Epimetheus. The followers of Epimetheus are improvident; see not far before them; and prefer such things as are agreeable for the present; whence they are oppressed with numerous straits, difficulties, and calamities; with which they almost continually struggle: but in the mean time gratify their own

temper; and, for want of a better knowledge of things, feed their minds with many vain hopes: and as with so many pleasing dreams, delight themselves, and sweeten the miseries of life.

But the followers of Prometheus are the prudent, wary men, that look into futurity, and cautiously guard against, prevent, and undermine many calamities and misfortunes. But this watchful, provident temper is attended with a deprivation of numerous pleasures, and the loss of various delights; whilst such men debar themselves the use even of innocent things: and what is still worse, rack and torture themselves with cares, fears, and disquiets; being bound fast to the pillar of necessity, and tormented with numberless thoughts (which for their swiftness are well compared to an eagle) that continually wound, tear, and gnaw their liver, or mind, unless, perhaps, they find some small remission by intervals, or as it were at nights: but then new anxieties, dreads, and fears, soon return again, as it were in the morning. And therefore, very few men, of either temper, have secured to themselves the advantages of providence, and kept clear of disquiets, troubles, and misfortunes.

Nor indeed can any man obtain this end; without *the assistance* of Hercules; that is, of such

fortitude and constancy of mind, as stands prepared against every event, and remains indifferent to every change; looking forward without being daunted; enjoying the good without disdain; and enduring the bad without impatience. And it must be observed, that even Prometheus had not the power to free himself; but owed his deliverance to another: for no natural, inbred force and fortitude could prove equal to such a task. The power of releasing him came from the utmost confines of the ocean, and from the sun; that is, from Apollo, or knowledge; and again, from a due consideration of the uncertainty, instability, and fluctuating state of human life; which is aptly represented by sailing the ocean. Accordingly Virgil has prudently joined these two together; accounting him happy who knows the causes of things, and has conquered all his fears, apprehensions, and superstitions. *

It is added, with great elegance, for supporting and confirming the human mind; that the great hero who thus delivered him, sailed the ocean in a cup or pitcher; to prevent the fear, or complaint, as if, through the narrowness of

* " Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere Causas,
" Quique metus omnes & inexorabile Fatum
" *Subjecit* pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari."

our nature, or a too great fragility thereof, we were absolutely incapable of that fortitude and constancy, to which Seneca finely alludes, when he says, "It is a noble thing, at once to partici- "pate the frailty of man, and the security of "a God."

We have hitherto, that we might not break the connexion of things, designedly omitted the last crime of Prometheus, that of attempting the chastity of Minerva; which heinous offence, it doubtless was, that caused the punishment of having his liver gnawed by the vulture. The meaning seems to be this; that when men are puffed up with arts and knowledge, they often try to subdue even the divine wisdom; and bring it under the dominion of sense and reason: whence inevitably follows a perpetual, and restless, rending and tearing of the mind. A sober and humble distinction must, therefore, be made betwixt divine and human things; and betwixt the oracles of sense and faith; unless mankind had rather chuse an heretical religion, and a fictitious and romantic philosophy. *

The last particular in the fable is the Games of the torch, instituted to Prometheus; which

* See *de Augmentis Scientiarum*, Sec. XXVIII. and Supplem. XV.

again relates to arts and sciences, as well as the invention of fire, for the commemoration and celebration whereof, these games were held. And here we have an extremely prudent admonition, directing us to expect the perfection of the sciences from succession; and not from the swiftness and abilities of any single person: for he who is fleetest and strongest in the course, may perhaps be less fit to keep his torch alight, since there is danger of its going out from too rapid, as well as from too slow a motion. * But this kind of contest with the torch seems to have been long dropt, and neglected; the sciences appearing to have flourished principally in their first authors, as Aristotle; Galen, Euclid, Ptolemy, &c. whilst their successors have done very little, or scarce made any attempts. But it were highly to be wished, that these games might be renewed, to the honour of Prometheus, or human nature; and that they might excite contest, emulation, and laudable endeavours; and the design meet with such success, as not to hang tottering, tremulous, and hazarded, upon the torch of any single person. †

* This matter is abundantly explained in the *de Augmentis*, and *Novum Organum*.

† The author here seems to have had himself in view; as being the *only* restorer or promotet of these games, in his

Mankind, therefore, should be admonished to rouze themselves, and try and exert their own strength and chance; and not place all their dependance upon a few men, whose abilities and capacities, perhaps, are not greater than their own.

These are the particulars which appear to us shadowed out by this trite and vulgar fable; though without denying that there may be contained in it several intimations that have a surprizing correspondence with the christian mysteries. In particular, the voyage of Hercules, made in a pitcher, to release Prometheus, bears an allusion to the word of God, coming in the frail vessel of the flesh to redeem mankind. But we indulge ourselves no such liberties as these; for fear of using strange fire at the altar of the Lord. *

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time. See the doctrine of the Traditive Lamp, in the *de Augmentis Scientiarum*.

* This fable, and its explanation may deserve to be read again and again, as a little system of physics, morality, religion, and all kinds of learning. And perhaps the full interpretation and elegance of the whole can scarce be perceived, without having frequent recourse from the part the explanation to the corresponding parts of the fable

AUZOU

III.

THE FABLE OF ORPHEUS;

EXPLAINED OF NATURAL AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

INTRODUCTION.

THE fable of Orpheus, though trite and common, has never been well interpreted; and seems to hold out a picture of universal philosophy: for to this sense may be easily transferred what is said of his being a wonderful and perfectly divine person, skilled in all kinds of harmony, subduing and drawing all things after him by sweet and gentle methods and modulations. For the labours of Orpheus exceed the labours of Hercules, both in power and dignity; as the works of knowledge exceed the works of strength.

FABLE.

ORPHEUS having his beloved wife snatched from him by sudden death, resolved upon descending to the infernal regions, to try if, by the power of his harp, he could re-obtain her. And in effect, he so appeased and soothed the infernal powers by the melody and sweetness of his harp and voice, that they indulged him the

liberty of taking her back; on condition that she should follow him behind, and he not turn to look upon her 'till they came into open day: But he, through the impatience of his care and affection, and thinking himself almost past danger, at length looked behind him; whereby the condition was violated, and she again precipitated to Pluto's regions. From this time Orpheus grew pensive and sad, a hater of the sex, and went into solitude; where, by the same sweetness of his harp and voice, he first drew the wild beasts of all sorts about him; so that, forgetting their natures, they were neither actuated by revenge, cruelty, lust, hunger, or the desire of prey; but stood gazing about him, in a tame and gentle manner; listening attentively to his music. Nay, so great was the power and efficacy of his harmony, that it even caused the trees and stones to remove, and place themselves, in a regular manner, about him. When he had for a time, and with great admiration, continued to do this, at length the Thracian women, raised by the instigation of Bacchus, first blew a deep and hoarse-sounding horn, in such an outrageous manner, that it quite drowned the music of Orpheus. And thus the power, which, as the link of their society, held all things *in* order, being dissolved, disturbance reigned

anew; each creature returned to its own nature; and pursued and preyed upon its fellow, as before. The rocks and woods also started back to their former places; and even Orpheus himself was at last torn to pieces by these female furies, and his limbs scattered all over the desart. But, in sorrow and revenge for his death, the river Helicon, sacred to the muses, hid its waters under ground, and rose again in other places.

EXPLANATION.

The fable receives this explanation. The music of Orpheus is of two kinds; one that appeases the infernal powers, and the other that draws together the wild beasts and trees. The former properly relates to natural, and the latter to moral philosophy, or civil society. The re-instatement and restoration of corruptible things, is the noblest work of natural philosophy; and, in a less degree, the preservation of bodies in their own state, or a prevention of their dissolution and corruption. And if this be possible, it can certainly be effected no other way than by proper and exquisite attemperations of nature; as it were by the harmony and

fine touching of the harp. * But as this is a thing of exceeding great difficulty, the end is seldom obtained; and that, probably, for no reason more than a curious and unseasonable impatience and solicitude. †

And therefore philosophy being almost unequal to the task, has cause to grow sad; and hence betakes itself to human affairs, insinuating into men's minds the love of virtue, equity and peace, by means of eloquence and persuasion: thus forming men into societies; bringing them under laws and regulations; and making them forget their unbridled passions and affections, so long as they hearken to precepts, and submit to discipline. And thus they soon after build themselves habitations, form cities, cultivate lands, plant orchards, gardens, &c. So

* Without an allegory, by discovering and acting according to the laws of nature; as those of attraction, gravitation, motion, separation, mixture, preservation, putrefaction, regeneration, &c. See the *Sylva Sylvarum*, and the History of Life and Death.

† Men being eager to see the end of natural philosophy, without having patience to pursue the means: for the laws of nature are not easily found; especially in that preposterous and absurd manner, by reasoning and speculation, without proper trials, and experimental enquiries.

that they may not improperly be said to remove and call the trees and stones together.

And this regard to civil affairs, is justly and regularly placed after diligent trial made for restoring the mortal body; the attempt being frustrated in the end: because the unavoidable necessity of death, thus evidently laid before mankind, animates them to seek a kind of eternity by works of perpetuity, character, and fame.

It is also prudently added, that Orpheus was afterwards averse to women and wedlock, because the indulgence of a married state, and the natural affections which men have for their children, often prevent them from entering upon any grand, noble, or meritorious enterprize for the public good;* as thinking it sufficient to obtain immortality by their descendants, without endeavouring at great actions.

And even the works of knowledge, though the most excellent among human things, have their periods; for after kingdoms and commonwealths have flourished for a time, disturbances, seditions and wars, often arise: in the din whereof, first the laws are silent, and not heard;†

* See the Essay on Marriage and single life.

† Here lies the allegory of the deep-sounding horn, mentioned in the fable.

and then men return to their own depra\
tures: whence cultivated lands and citi
become desolate and waste. And if thi
der continues, learning and philosophy is
bly torn to pieces; so that only some sc
fragments thereof can afterwards be fo
and down, in a few places, like planks
shipwreck. And barbarous times succ
the river Helicon dips under ground; tha
ters are buried, till things having unc
their due course of changes, learning rise
and shews its head; though seldom in th
place, but in some other nation. *

* Thus we see that Orpheus denotes learning; E
things, or the subject of learning; Bacchus, and t
cian women, men's ungoverned passions and appet
And in the same manner, these fables might be fi
illustrated, and brought down to the capacities of c
who usually learn them in an unscientifical m
school.

IV.

THE FABLE OF ATALANTA AND HIPPOMENES;

EXPLAINED OF THE CONTEST BETWIXT ART AND NATURE.

ATALANTA, who was exceeding fleet, contended with Hippomenes in the course, on condition, that if Hippomenes won, he should espouse her, or forfeit his life, if he lost. The match was very unequal; for Atalanta had conquered numbers, to their destruction. Hippomenes, therefore, had recourse to stratagem. He procured three golden apples; and purposely carried them with him: they started; Atalanta out-stripped him soon; then Hippomenes bowled one of his apples before her, a-cross the course, in order, not only to make her stoop, but to draw her out of the path. She, prompted by female curiosity, and the beauty of the golden fruit, starts from the course to take up the apple. Hippomenes, in the mean time, holds on his way, and steps before her; but she, by her natural swiftness, soon fetches up her lost ground, and leaves him again behind. Hippomenes however, by rightly timing his second and third throw, at length, won the race; not by his swiftness, but his cunning.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable seems to contain a noble allegory of the contest betwixt art and nature. For art, here denoted by Atalanta, is much swifter, or more expeditious, in its operations than nature, when all obstacles and impediments are removed, and sooner arrives at its end. This appears almost in every instance. Thus fruit comes slowly from the kernel, but soon by inoculation or incision: Clay, left to itself, is a long time in acquiring a stony hardness; but is presently burnt by fire into brick. * So again in human life, nature is a long while in alleviating and abolishing the remembrance of pain, and assuaging the troubles of the mind; but moral philosophy, which is the art of living, performs it presently. Yet this prerogative and singular efficacy of art, is stopt and retarded, to the infinite detriment of human life, by certain golden apples: for there is no one science, or art, that constantly holds on its true and proper course to the end; but they are all continually stopping short, forsaking the track, and turning

* A proper collection of these instances should be made for the encouragement of men in their endeavours to *advance arts*, and produce considerable effects.

aside to profit and convenience; exactly like Atalanta. Whence, it is no wonder that art gets not the victory over nature; nor, according to the condition of the contest, brings her under subjection: but, on the contrary, remains subject to her, as a wife to a husband. *

* The author in all his physical works, proceeds upon this foundation; that it is possible, and practicable, for art to obtain the victory over nature; that is, for human industry and power to procure, by the means of proper knowledge, such things as are necessary to render life as happy and commodious as its mortal state will allow: For instance, that it is possible to lengthen the present period of human life; bring the winds more under command, and every way extend and enlarge the dominion, or empire, of man over the works of nature. And let no one fearfully apprehend, that there is danger in thus endeavouring to take the reins of government out of nature's hands, and putting them into the weak hands of men: for the distinction betwixt men and nature, is imaginary, and only made to help the understanding; man himself being necessarily subject to the laws of nature: though within the compass of these laws he has a very extensive power, that will always be commensurate to knowledge.

V.

THE FABLE OF ERICTHONIUS;

EXPLAINED OF THE IMPROPER USE OF FORCE IN NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

THE poets feign that Vulcan attempted the chastity of Minerva; and impatient of refusal, had recourse to force: but in the struggle, his semen fell upon the ground, and produced Ericthonius; whose body from the middle upwards was comely, and well proportioned; but his thighs and legs, small, shrunk, and deformed, like an eel. Conscious of this defect, he became the inventor of chariots; so as to shew the graceful, but conceal the deformed part of his body.

EXPLANATION.

THIS strange and monstrous fable seems to carry this meaning. Art is here represented under the person of Vulcan; by reason of the various uses it makes of fire: and nature under the person of Minerva; by reason of the industry employed in her works. Art, therefore, whenever it offers violence to nature, in order to conquer, subdue, and bend her to its purpose, *by tortures* and force of all kinds, seldom

obtains the end proposed: Yet upon great struggle and application, there proceed certain imperfect births, or lame abortive works; specious in appearance, but weak and unstable in use: which are, nevertheless, with great pomp, and deceitful appearances, triumphantly carried about, and shewn by impostors. A procedure very familiar, and remarkable, in chemical productions, and new mechanical Inventions; especially when the inventors rather hug their errors, than improve upon them, and go on struggling with nature, not courting her, in the proper obsequious manner, for an intimate embrace. *

* It is a fundamental position with the author, that nature, like the ladies, can only be won by submission. See the *Novum Organum*.

VI.

THE FABLE OF ICARUS, AND THAT OF SCYLLY AND CHARYBDIS;

EXPLAINED OF MEDIOCRITY IN NATURAL AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

MEDIOCRITY, or the holding of a middle course, has been highly extolled in morality; but little in matters of science, though no less useful and proper here; whilst in politics it is held suspected, or to be employed with judgment. The ancients described mediocrity in manners, by the course prescribed to Icarus; and in matters of the understanding, by the steering betwixt Scilla and Charibdis, on account of the great difficulty and danger in passing those streights.

Icarus, being to fly across the sea, was ordered by his father neither to soar too high, nor fly too low; for as his wings were fastened together with wax, there was danger of its melting by the sun's heat in too high a flight; and of its becoming less tenacious by the moisture, if he kept too near the vapour of the sea. But he, with a juvenile confidence, soars aloft, and fell down headlong.

EXPLANATION.

THE fable is vulgar, and easily interpreted; for the path of virtue lies strait, between excess on the one side, and defect on the other. And no wonder that excess should prove the bane of Icarus, exulting in juvenile strength and vigour: for excess is the natural vice of youth; as defect is that of old age. And if a man must perish by either, Icarus chose the better of the two; for all defects are justly esteemed more depraved than excesses. There is some magnanimity in excess, that, like a bird, claims kindred with the heavens: but defect is a reptile, that basely crawls upon the earth. It was excellently said by Heraclitus; "A dry light makes "the best soul;" for if the soul contracts moisture from the earth, it perfectly degenerates and sinks. On the other hand, moderation must be observed, to prevent this fine light from burning, by its too great subtilty and dryness. But these observations are common.

In matters of the understanding it requires great skill, and a particular felicity, to steer clear of Scylla and Charybdis. If the ship strikes upon Scylla, it is dashed in pieces against the rocks: if upon Charybdis, it is swallowed

outright. This allegory is pregnant with matter; but we shall only observe the force of it lies here, that a mean be observed in every doctrine and science, and in the rules and axioms thereof, between the rocks of distinctions, and the whirlpools of universalities: for these two are the bane and shipwreck of fine geniuses and arts. *

* For arts are founded on particulars, as we see in the arts of paper, sugar, gunpowder, &c. so that generals let arts slip through them: and subtile distinctions and divisions split and grind nature so far, as to render the objects unfit for the hand, the sense, or even the understanding to work with, to advantage. Hence those fruitless and barren speculations of the schoolmen; the infinite divisibility of matter; and mathematical notions, and metaphysical powers introduced into physic.

VII.

THE FABLE OF PROTEUS;

EXPLAINED OF MATTER AND ITS CHANGES.

PROTEUS, according to the poets, was Neptune's herdsman; an old man, and a most extraordinary prophet; who understood things past and present as well as future; so that besides the business of divination, he was the revealer and interpreter of all antiquity, and secrets of every kind. He lived in a vast cave; where his custom was to tell over his herd of sea-calves at noon, and then to sleep. Whoever consulted him, had no other way of obtaining an answer, but by binding him with manacles and fetters; when he, endeavouring to free himself, would change into all kinds of shapes and miraculous forms; as of fire, water, wild beasts, &c. till at length he resumed his own shape again.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable seems to point at the secrets of nature, and the states of matter. For the person of Proteus denotes matter, the oldest of all things, after God himself; * that resides, as in

* Proteus properly signifies primary, oldest, or first.

a cave, under the vast concavity of the heavens. He is represented as the servant of Neptune; because the various operations and modifications of matter, are principally wrought in a fluid state. The herd, or flock of Proteus, seems to be no other than the several kinds of animals, plants, and minerals, in which matter appears to diffuse and spend itself; so that after having formed these several species, and as it were finished its task, it seems to sleep and repose, without otherwise attempting to produce any new ones. And this is the moral of Proteus's counting his herd, then going to sleep.

This is said to be done at noon, not in the morning or evening; by which is meant the time best fitted and disposed for the production of species; from a matter duly prepared, and made ready before-hand, and now lying in a middle state, between its first rudiments and decline: which, we learn from sacred history, was the case at the time of the creation; when, by the efficacy of the divine command, matter directly came together, without any transformation or intermediate changes, which it affects; instantly obeyed the order, and appeared in the form of creatures.

And thus far the fable reaches of Proteus, and his flock, at liberty and unrestrained. For

the universe, with the common structures and fabrics of the creatures, is the face of matter, not under constraint, or as the flock wrought upon, and tortured, by human means. But if any skilful minister of nature shall apply force to matter, and by design torture and vex it, in order to its annihilation, it, on the contrary, being brought under this necessity, changes and transforms itself into a strange variety of shapes and appearances; for nothing but the power of the Creator can annihilate, or truly destroy it: so that at length, running through the whole circle of transformations, and compleating its period, it in some degree restores itself, if the force be continued. And that method of binding, torturing, or detaining, will prove the most effectual and expeditious, which makes use of manacles and fetters; that is, lays hold and works upon matter in the extremest degrees.*

The addition in the fable that makes Proteus a prophet, who had the knowledge of things past, present, and future, excellently agrees with the nature of matter; as he who knows the pro-

* The author has proposed a certain method of working in this manner, by means of a new engine, or particular digester applied to the fire. See *Sylva Sylvarum*, and the History of Rarity and Density.

perties, the changes, and the processes of matter, must, of necessity, understand the effects and sum of what it does, has done, or can do; though his knowledge extends not to all the parts and particulars thereof. *

VIII.

THE FABLE OF CUPID;

EXPLAINED OF THE CORPUSCULAR PHILOSOPHY.

THE particulars related by the poets of Cupid, or love, do not properly agree to the same person, yet they differ only so far, that if the confusion of persons be rejected, the correspondence may hold. They say, that love was the most ancient of all the gods, and existed before every thing else, except chaos, which is held coeval therewith. But for chaos, the ancients never paid divine honours, nor gave the title of a God thereto. Love is represented absolutely without progenitor, excepting only that he is said to have proceeded from the egg of Nox; but that himself begot the gods, and all things else, on chaos. His attributes are four; viz. 1.

* See fable IV. See also the *Novum Organum*, Part II. *Aph. 1. 2, 3, 4, 5,* &c.

perpetual infancy, 2. blindness, 3. nakedness, and 4. archery.

There was also another Cupid, or love, the youngest son of the Gods, born of Venus; and upon him the attributes of the elder are transferred, with some degree of correspondence.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable points at, and enters, the cradle of nature. Love seems to be the appetite, or incentive, of the primitive matter; or, to speak more distinctly, the natural motion, or moving principle, of the original corpuscles, or atoms: this being the most ancient and only power that made and wrought all things out of matter. It is absolutely without parent, that is, without cause: for causes are as parents to effects: but this power or efficacy could have no natural cause; for, excepting God, nothing was before it: and therefore it could have no efficient in nature. And as nothing is more inward with nature, it can neither be a genus nor a form; and therefore, whatever it is, it must be somewhat positive, though inexpressible. And if it were possible to conceive its modus and process, yet it could not be known from its cause, as being, next to God, the cause of causes, and itself *without* a cause. And perhaps we are not to

hope that the modus of it should fall, or be comprehended, under human enquiry. Whence it is properly feigned to be the egg of Nox, or laid in the dark. *

The divine philosopher declares, that " God has made every thing beautiful in its season; and has given over the world to our disputes and enquiries: but that man cannot find out the work which God has wrought, from its beginning up to its end." Thus the summary or collective law of nature, or the principle of love, impressed by God upon the original particles of all things, so as to make them attack each other and come together, by the repetition and multiplication whereof, all the variety in the universe is produced, can scarce possibly find full admittance into the thoughts of men; though some faint notion may be had thereof. The Greek philosophy is subtile, and busied in discovering the material principles of things; but negligent and languid in discovering the principles of motion, in which the energy and efficacy of every operation consists. And here the Greek

* Let it be examined what approximations have been made by the modern philosophers to the investigation of this *principle*; in their doctrines, calculations, and attempts, to *assign the cause* of gravity.

philosophers seem perfectly blind and childish: for the opinion of the Peripatetics, as to the stimulus of matter, by privation, is little more than words; or rather sound than signification. And they who refer it to God, though they do well therein, yet they do it by a start, and not by proper degrees of assent: for doubtless there is one summary, or capital law, in which nature meets, subordinate to God; viz. the law mentioned in the passage above quoted from Solomon; or the work which God has wrought from its beginning up to its end. *

Democritus, who farther considered this subject, having first supposed an atom, or corpuscle, of some dimension or figure, attributed thereto one appetite, desire, or first motion simply; and another comparatively: imagining that all things properly tended to the centre of the world; those containing more matter falling faster to the center, and thereby removing, and in the shock driving away, such as held less. But this is a slender conceit, and regards too few particulars; for neither the revolutions of the celestial bodies, nor the contractions and expansions of things, can be reduced to this principle. And

* Viz. The chain of causes and effects, traced gradually up to its last link; where philosophy ends: but not before *it has discovered* every intermediate link.

for the opinion of Epicurus, as to the declination and fortuitous agitation of atoms, this only brings the matter back again to a trifle, and wraps it up in ignorance and night.

Cupid is elegantly drawn a perpetual child: for compounds are larger things, and have their periods of age; but the first seeds or atoms of bodies are small, and remain in a perpetual infant state.*

He is again justly represented naked; as all compounds may properly be said to be dressed and cloathed, or to assume a personage; whence nothing remains truely naked, but the original particles of things.

The blindness of Cupid, contains a deep allegory; for this same Cupid, love, or appetite of the world, seems to have very little foresight; but directs his steps and motions conformably to what he finds next him; as blind men do when they feel out their way: which renders the divine and over-ruling Providence and foresight the more surprizing: as by a certain steady law, it brings such a beautiful order, and regularity, of things out of what seems extremely casual, void of design, and as it were really blind.

The last attribute of Cupid is archery; viz. a

* See Sir Isaac Newton of the original particles of matter, *in the queries* at the end of his optics.

virtue or power operating at a distance: for every thing that operates at a distance, may seem, as it were, to dart, or shoot with arrows. And whoever allows of atoms and vacuity, necessarily supposes that the virtue of atoms operates at a distance; for without this operation, no motion could be excited, on account of the vacuum interposing; but all things would remain sluggish and unmoved.

As to the other Cupid, he is properly said to be the youngest son of the gods, as his power could not take place before the formation of species, or particular bodies. The description given us of him transfers the allegory to morality, though he still retains some resemblance with the ancient Cupid: for as Venus universally excites the affection of association, and the desire of procreation, her son Cupid applies the affection to individuals: so that the general disposition proceeds from Venus, but the more close sympathy from Cupid. The former depends upon a near approximation of causes; but the latter upon deeper, more necessitating and uncontrolable principles, as if they proceeded from the ancient Cupid, on whom all exquisite sympathies depend. *

* See this fable farther illustrated in several parts of the author's works.

IX.

THE FABLE OF DEUCALION:

EXPLAINED OF AN USEFUL HINT IN NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

THE poets tell us, that the inhabitants of the old world being totally destroyed by the universal deluge, excepting Deucalion and Pyrrha; these two, desiring with zealous and fervent devotion, to restore mankind, received this oracle for answer; that "they should succeed by throwing their mother's bones behind them." This at first cast them into great sorrow and despair; because, as all things were levelled by the deluge, it was in vain to seek their mother's tomb: but at length, they understood the expression of the oracle to signify the stones of the earth, which is esteemed the mother of all things.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable seems to reveal a secret of nature, and correct an error familiar to the mind; for men's ignorance leads them to expect the renovation or restauration of things, from their corruption and remains; as the Phœnix is said to be restored out of its ashes: which is a ver

improper procedure; because such kind of materials have finished their course, and are become absolutely unfit to supply the first rudiments of the same things again: whence, in cases of renovation, recourse should be had to more common principles.*

X.

THE FABLE OF SPHINX;

EXPLAINED OF THE SCIENCES.

THEY relate that Sphinx was a monster, variously formed; having the face and voice of a virgin, the wings of a bird, and the talons of a Gryphin. She resided on the top of a mountain, near the city Thebes; and also beset the highways. Her manner was to lie in ambush, and seize the travellers; and having them in her power, proposed to them certain dark and perplexed riddles, which it was thought she received from the muses: And if her wretched captives could not solve, and interpret, these riddles, she with great cruelty fell upon them, in their hesitation and confusion, and tore them to pieces.

* See she *Sylva Sylvarum*, and the History of Life and Death.

This plague having reigned a long time, the Thebans at length offered their kingdom to the man who could interpret her riddles; there being no other way to subdue her. Oedipus, a penetrating, and prudent man, though lame in his feet, excited by so great a reward, accepted the condition; and with a good assurance of mind, chearfully presented himself before the monster, who directly asked him, "What creature that was, which being born four-footed, afterwards became two-footed, then three-footed, and lastly four-footed again?" Oedipus, with a presence of mind, replied it was man; who, upon his first birth, and infant state, crawled upon all four, in endeavouring to walk; but not long after that, went upright upon his two natural feet; again, in old age walked three-footed, with a stick; and at last growing decrepid, lay four-footed confined to his bed. And having by this exact solution obtained the victory, he slew the monster, and laying the carcass upon an ass, led her away as in triumph. And upon this he was, according to the agreement, made king of Thebes.

EXPLANATION.

THIS is an elegant, instructive fable, and seems invented to represent science, especially as joined with practice. For science may, without absurdity, be called a monster; being strangely gazed at, and admired, by the ignorant and unskilful. Her figure and form is various, by reason of the vast variety of subjects that science considers. Her voice and countenance are represented female, by reason of her gay appearance, and volubility of speech. * Wings are added, because the sciences and their inventions run, and fly about, in a moment; for knowledge, like light communicated from one torch to another, is presently catched, and copiously diffused. Sharp and hooked talons are elegantly attributed to her; because the axioms and arguments of science enter the mind, lay hold of it, fix it down, and keep it from moving or slipping away. This the sacred philosopher observed, when he said, "The words of the wise are like goads, or nails, driven far in."

* For science or philosophy has, in the general, rather been a shewy and talkative thing, than solid, serviceable, and effective.

Again, all science seems placed on high, as it were on the tops of mountains, that are hard to climb; for science is justly imagined a sublime and lofty thing, looking down upon ignorance from an eminence, and at the same time taking an extensive view on all sides, as is usual on the tops of mountains. Science is said to beset the highways; because through all the journey and peregrination of human life, there is matter and occasion offered of contemplation.

Sphinx is said to propose various difficult questions, and riddles, to men, which she received from the muses; and these questions, so long as they remain with the muses, may very well be unaccompanied with severity; for while there is no other end of contemplation and enquiry but that of knowledge alone, the understanding is not oppressed, or driven to straits and difficulties, but expatiates and ranges at large, and even receives a degree of pleasure from doubt and variety. But after the muses have given over their riddles to Sphinx, that is, to practice, which urges and impels to action, choice, and determination, then it is that they become torturing, severe, and trying: and unless solved and interpreted, strangely perplex and harass the human mind, rend it every way,

and perfectly tear it to pieces. * All the riddles of Sphinx, therefore, have two conditions annexed; viz. dilaceration to those who do not solve them; and empire to those that do. For he who understands the thing proposed, obtains his end: and every artificer rules over his work. †

Sphinx has no more than two kinds of riddles; one relating to the nature of things; the other to the nature of man: and correspondent to these, the prizes of the solution are two kinds of empire; the empire over nature, and the empire over man. For the true and ultimate end of natural philosophy, is dominion over natural things, natural bodies, remedies, machines, and

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* To gain the clearer notion of this, we need only consider the necessities and inconveniences, under which the inhabitants, even of civilized countries, frequently labour, from inundations, conflagrations, dearths, storms, lightning, wars, devastation, tyrannical governments, blind and furious zeal, superstition, want of commerce aud certain commodities; all which particulars, when they come to be practically considered, in order to their being remedied, removed or prevented, distract and perplex the mind; especially when the causes of these effects remain unknown, so as not to be governable by human means.

† This is what the author so frequently inculcates in his *Novum Organum*; viz that knowledge and power are reciprocal; so that to improve in knowledge, is to improve in

numberless other particulars: though the schools, contented with what spontaneously offers, and swollen with their own discourses, neglect, and in a manner despise, both things and works.*

But the riddle proposed to Oedipus, the solution whereof acquired him the Theban kingdom, regarded the nature of man; for he who has thoroughly looked into and examined human nature, may, in a manner, command his own fortune, and seems born to acquire dominion and rule.† Accordingly, Virgil properly makes the arts of government to be the arts of the Romans.‡ It was, therefore, extremely apposite in Augustus Cæsar, to use the image of Sphinx in his signet, whether this happened by accident or by design, for he of all men was deeply versed in politics, and through the course of his life very happily solved abundance of new riddles, with regard to the nature of man: and unless he had done this with great dexterity and

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the power of commanding nature, by introducing new arts, and producing works and effects.

* This is largely prosecuted in the *Novum Organum*.

† See the *de Augmentis Scientiarum*, of Self-Policy, or the Doctrine of Rising in Life.

‡ "Tu regere Imperio Populos, Romane, memento:
"*Hæ tibi* erunt Artes."

ready address, he would frequently have been involved in imminent danger, if not destruction.

It is, with the utmost elegance, added in the fable, that when Sphinx was conquered, her carcass was laid upon an ass; for there is nothing so subtile and abstruse, but after being once made plain, intelligible and common, it may be received by the slowest capacity.

We must not omit, that Sphinx was conquered by a lame man, and impotent in his feet; for men usually make too much haste to the solution of Sphinx's riddles: whence it happens, that she prevailing, their minds are rather racked and torn by disputes, than an empire gained by works and effects. *

* See the first part of the *Novum Organum.*

XI.

THE FABLE OF PROSERPINE;

EXPLAINED OF THE SPIRIT INCLUDED IN NATURAL BODIES.

THEY tell us, Pluto having, upon that memorable division of empire among the gods, received the infernal regions for his share, despaired of winning any one of the goddesses in marriage, by an obsequious courtship, and therefore, through necessity, resolved upon a rape: And watching his opportunity, he suddenly seizes upon Proserpine, a most beautiful virgin, the daughter of Ceres, as she was gathering Narcissus flowers in the meads of Sicily; and hurrying her to his chariot, carried her with him to the subterraneal regions; where she was treated with the highest reverence, and styled the Lady of Dis. But Ceres missing her only daughter, whom she extremely loved, grew pensive and anxious, beyond measure; and taking a lighted torch in her hand, wandered the world over in quest of her daughter: but all to no purpose; 'till suspecting she might be carried to the infernal regions, she with great lamentation, and abundance of tears, importuned Jupiter to restore her; and with much ado prevailed, so far as to recover and *bring her away*, if she had tasted nothing there.

This proved a hard condition upon the mother; for Proserpine was found to have eaten three kernels of a pomgranate. Ceres, however, desisted not, but fell to her entreaties and lamentations afresh; insomuch that, at last, it was indulged her, that Proserpine should divide the year betwixt her husband and her mother; and live six months with the one, and as many with the other. After this, Theseus and Perithous, with uncommon audacity, attempted to force Proserpine away from Pluto's bed; but happening to grow tired in their journey, and resting themselves upon a stone, in the realms below, they could never rise from it again; but remain sitting there for ever. Proserpine, therefore, still continued Queen of the Lower Regions; in honour of whom there was also added this grand privilege, that though it had never been permitted any one to return, after having once descended thither, a particular exception was made, that he who brought a golden bough, as a present to Proserpine, might on that condition, descend and return. This was an only bough, that grew in a large dark grove, not from a tree of its own, but, like the misletoe, from another; and when plucked away, a fresh one always shot out in its stead.

Leaving, therefore, their conceits to themselves, we shall freely declare our own sentiments upon this last part of the fable. We are certain from numerous figures and expressions of the ancients, that they judged the conservation, and in some degree, the renovation of natural bodies, to be no desperate or impossible thing; but rather abstruse, and out of the common road, than wholly impracticable. And this seems to be their opinion in the present case; as they have placed this bough among an infinite number of shrubs, in a spacious and thick wood. They supposed it of gold, because gold is the emblem of duration. They feigned it adventitious, not native, because such an effect is to be expected from art; and not from any medicine, or any simple or mere natural way of working. *

* The author's History of Life and Death is a comment upon this text.

spirit we speak of, is in the fittest disposition to be catched up by terrestrial matter, when it begins to coagulate, or grow torpid, as it were.

It is an honour justly attributed to Proserpine, and not to any other wife of the gods, that of being the lady, or mistress, of her husband; because this spirit performs all the operations in the subterraneal regions, whilst Pluto, or the earth, remains stupid, or as it were ignorant of them.*

The æther, or the efficacy of the heavenly bodies, denoted by Ceres, endeavours with infinite diligence, to force out this spirit, and restore it to its pristine state. And by the torch in the hand of Ceres, or the æther, is doubtless meant the sun, which disperses light over the whole globe of the earth; and if the thing were possible, must have the greatest share in recovering Proserpine, or re-instating the subterraneal spirit. Yet Proserpine still continues and dwells below, after the manner excellently described in the condition betwixt Jupiter and Ceres. For first, it is certain that there are two ways of detaining the spirit, in solid and ter-

* See the *Sylva Sylvarum*, under the article Imagination, Nature, Spirit, and Sympathy. See also the axioms at the end of the History of Life and Death.

restrial matter; the one by condensation, or obstruction, which is mere violence and imprisonment: the other, by administring a proper aliment; which is spontaneous and free. For after the included spirit begins to feed and nourish itself, it is not in a hurry to fly off, but remains, as it were, fixed in its own earth. And this is the moral of Proserpine's tasting the pomgranate: and were it not for this, she must long ago have been carried up by Ceres, who, with her torch, wandered the world over, and so the earth have been left without its spirit. For though the spirit, in metals and minerals, may perhaps be, after a particular manner, wrought in by the solidity of the mass, yet the spirit of vegetables, and animals, has open passages to escape at, unless it be willingly detained, in the way of sipping and tasting them. *

The second article of agreement, that of Proserpine's remaining six months with her mother, and six with her husband, is an elegant descrip-

* This point is largely explained in the author's History of Life and Death, but still deserves to be set in a more full and general light, by new instances and enforcements, as a particular, which, though neglected, or almost overlooked, infinitely regards the improvement of natural philosophy. See the *Sylva Sylvarum*, under the article Imagination, Nature, Spirit, Sympathy.

tion of the division of the year: for the spirit diffused through the earth, lives above ground in the vegetable world, during the summer months; but in the winter returns under ground again.

The attempt of Theseus and Perithous to bring Proserpine away, denotes that the more subtile spirits, which descend in many bodies to the earth, may frequently be unable to drink in, unite with themselves, and carry off the subterraneous spirit; but, on the contrary, be coagulated by it, and rise no more; so as to increase the inhabitants, and add to the dominion of Proserpine.*

The Alchemists will be apt to fall in with our interpretation of the golden bough, whether we will or no; because they promise golden mountains, and the restoration of natural bodies from their stone; as from the gates of Pluto: but we are well assured, that their theory has no just foundation; and suspect they have no very encouraging practical proofs of its soundness.

* Many philosophers have certain speculations to this purpose. Sir Isaac Newton, in particular, suspects that the earth receives its vivifying spirit from the comets. And the philosophical chemists and astrologers have spun the thought into many phantastical distinctions and varieties. See Newton. Princip. Lib. III. p. 473. &c. See also *Sylva Sylvarum.*

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* The author's History of Life and Death is a comment upon this text.

MORAL MYTHOLOGY.

I.

THE FABLE OF MEMNON;

EXPLAINED OF THE FATAL PRECIPITANCY OF YOUTH.

THE poets made Memnon the son of Aurora; and bring him to the Trogan war in beautiful armour, and flushed with popular praise; where, thirsting after farther glory, and rashly hurrying on to the greatest enterprises, he engages the bravest warrior of all the Greeks, Achilles; and falls by his hand, in single combat. Jupiter, in commiseration of his death, sent birds to grace his funeral, that perpetually chanted certain mournful and bewailing dirges. It is also reported, that the rays of the rising sun, striking his statue, used to give a lamenting sound.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable regards the unfortunate end of those promising youths, who, like sons of the *morning*, elate with empty hopes and glitter

outsides, attempt things beyond their strength; challenge the bravest heroes; provoke them to the combat; and proving unequal, die in their high attempts.

The death of such youths seldom fails to meet with infinite pity; as no mortal calamity is more moving and afflicting, than to see the flower of virtue cropt before its time. Nay, the prime of life enjoyed to the full, or even to a degree of envy, does not assuage or moderate the grief occasioned by the untimely death of such hopeful youths: But lamentations and bewailings fly, like mournful birds, about their tombs, for a long while after: especially upon all fresh occasions, new commotions, and the beginning of great actions, the passionate desire of them is renewed, as by the sun's morning rays.

II.

THE FABLE OF TYTHONUS;

EXPLAINED OF PREDOMINANT PASSIONS.

IT is elegantly fabled by Tythonus, that being exceedingly beloved by Aurora, she petitioned Jupiter that he might prove immortal; thereby to secure herself the everlasting enjoyment of his *company: but* through female inadvertence she

forgot to add, that he might never grow old: so that, though he proved immortal, he became miserably worn and consumed with age, insomuch, that Jupiter, out of pity, at length transformed him to a grashopper.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable seems to contain an ingenious description of pleasure; which at first, as it were in the morning of the day, is so welcome, that men pray to have it everlasting: but forget that satiety and weariness of it will, like old age, overtake them; though they think not of it: so that at length, when their appetite for pleasurable actions is gone, their desires and affections often continue: whence we commonly find that aged persons delight themselves with the discourse and remembrance of the things agreeable to them in their better days. This is very remarkable in men of a loose, and men of a military life: the former whereof are always talking over their amours; and the latter the exploits of their youth; like grashoppers, that show their vigour only by their chirping. *

* See the History of Life and Death.

III.

THE FABLE OF NARCISSUS;

EXPLAINED OF SELF-LOVE.

NARCISSUS is said to have been extremely beautiful and comely, but intolerably proud and disdainful; so that, pleased with himself, and scorning the world, he led a solitary life in the woods; hunting only with a few followers, who were his professed admirers: and amongst the rest, the nymph Echo was his constant attendant. In this method of life it was once his fate to approach a clear fountain; where he laid himself down to rest, in the noon-day heat; when, beholding his image in the water, he fell into such a rapture and admiration of himself, that he could by no means be got away; but remained continually fixed and gazing; till at length he was turned into a flower, of his own name, which appears early in the spring, and is consecrated to the infernal deities, Pluto, Proserpine, and the furies.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable seems to paint the behaviour and *fortune* of those, who, for their beauty, or other *endowments*, wherewith nature, (without any

industry of their own,) has graced and adorned them, are extravagantly fond of themselves. For men of such a disposition generally affect retirement, and absence from public affairs; as a life of business must necessarily subject them to many neglects and contempts, which might disturb and ruffle their minds: whence such persons commonly lead a solitary, private, and shadowy life; see little company, and those only such as highly admire and reverence them; or, like an echo, assent to all they say.

And they who are depraved, and rendered still fonder of themselves by this custom, grow strangely indolent, unactive, and perfectly stupid. The Narcissus, a spring-flower, is an elegant emblem of this temper, which at first flourishes, and is talked of, but when ripe, frustrates the expectation conceived of it.

And that this flower should be sacred to the infernal powers, carries on the allusion still farther; because men of this humour are perfectly useless in all respects: for whatever yields no fruit, but passes, and is no more, like the way of a ship in the sea, was by the ancients consecrated to the infernal shades and powers.

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* The author's History of Life and Death is a comment upon this text.

These Sirens resided in certain pleasant islands, and when from their watch-tower they saw any ship approaching, they first detained the sailors by their music, then inticing them to shore, destroyed them.

Their singing was not of one and the same kind, but they adapted their tunes exactly to the nature of each person, in order to captivate and secure him. And so destructive had they been, that these islands of the Sirens appeared, to a very great distance, white with the bones of their unburied captives.

Two different remedies were invented to protect persons against them, the one by Ulysses, the other by Orpheus. Ulysses commanded his associates to stop their ears close with wax; and he determining to make the trial, and yet avoid the danger, ordered himself to be tied fast to a mast of the ship, giving strict charge not to be unbound, even though himself should entreat it; but Orpheus, without any binding at all, escaped the danger, by loudly chanting to his harp the praises of the gods, whereby he drowned the voices of the Sirens.

EXPLANATION.

This fable is of the moral kind, and appears *no less elegant* than easy to interpret. For plea-

sures proceed from plenty and affluence, attended with activity or exultation of the mind.* Anciently their first incentives were quick, and seized upon men as if they had been winged; but learning and philosophy afterwards prevailing, had, at least, the power to lay the mind under some restraint, and make it consider the issue of things, and thus deprived pleasures of their wings.

This conquest redounded greatly to the honor and ornament of the muses, for after it appeared, by the example of a few, that philosophy could introduce a contempt of pleasures, it immediately seemed to be a sublime thing that could raise and elevate the soul, fixed in a manner down to earth, and thus render men's thoughts, which reside in the head, winged as it were, or sublime.

Only the mother of the Sirens was not thus plumed on the head, which doubtless denotes superficial learning, invented and used for delight and levity; an eminent example whereof we have in Petronius, who, after receiving sentence of death, still continued his gay frothy humour, and, as Tacitus observes, used his learning

* The one denoted by the river Achelous, and the other by Terpsichore, the muse that invented the Cithara, and delighted in dancing.

to solace or divert himself; and instead of such discourses as give a firmness and constancy of mind, read nothing but loose poems and verses.* Such learning as this seems to pluck the crowns again from the muses heads, and restore them to the Sirens.

The Sirens are said to inhabit certain islands, because pleasures generally seek retirement, and often shun society. And for their songs, with the manifold artifice and destructiveness thereof, this is too obvious and common to need explation. But that particular, of the bones stretching like white clifts along the shores, and appearing afar off, contains a more subtile allegory, and denotes that the examples of others calamity and misfortunes, though ever so manifest and apparent, have yet but little force to deter the corrupt nature of man from pleasures.

The allegory of the remedies against the Sirens is not difficult, but very wise and noble: it proposes, in effect, three remedies, as well against subtile as violent mischiefs, two drawn from philosophy and one from religion.

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* "Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus;
"Rumoresque Senum severiorum
"Omnes unius estimemus Assis.

And again—

"Jura Senes norint, & quod sit Fasque Nefasque
"Inquirant tristes; Legumque examina servent."

The first means of escaping is to resist the earliest temptation in the beginning, and diligently avoid and cut off all occasions that may solicit or sway the mind; and this is well represented by stopping of the ears; a kind of remedy to be necessarily used with mean and vulgar minds, such as the retinue of Ulysses.

But nobler spirits may converse, even in the midst of pleasures, if the mind be well guarded with constancy and resolution. And thus some delight to make a severe trial of their own virtue, and thoroughly acquaint themselves with the folly and madness of pleasures, without complying or being wholly given up to them; which is what Solomon professes of himself, when he closes the account of all the numerous pleasures he gave a loose to, with this expression, "But wisdom still continued with me." Such heroes in virtue may, therefore, remain unmoved by the greatest incentives to pleasure, and stop themselves on the very precipice of danger; if, according to the example of Ulysses, they interdict themselves all pernicious counsel, and obsequiousness of their friends and companions, which have the greatest power to shake and unsettle the mind.

But the most excellent remedy, in every temptation, is that of Orpheus, who, by loudly chant-

ing and resounding the praises of the gods, confounded the voices, and kept himself from hearing the music of the Sirens; for divine contemplations exceed the pleasures of sense, not only in power but also in sweetness.

VII.

THE FABLE OF DIOMED;

EXPLAINED OF PERSECUTION, OR ZEAL FOR RELIGION.

DIOMED acquired great glory and honour at the Trojan war, and was highly favoured by Pallas, who encouraged and excited him by no means to spare Venus, if he should casually meet her in fight. He followed the advice with too much eagerness and intrepidity, and accordingly wounded that goddess in her hand. This presumptuous action remained unpunished for a time; and when the war was ended, he returned with great glory and renown to his own country, where, finding himself embroiled with domestic affairs, he retired into Italy. Here also, at first he was well received, and nobly entertained by King Daunus, who, besides other gifts and honours, erected statues for him over all his dominions. But upon the first calamity that afflicted *the people* after the stranger's arrival, Daunus

immediately reflected that he entertained a devoted person in his palace, an enemy to the gods, and one who had sacrilegiously wounded a goddess with his sword, whom it was impious but to touch. To expiate, therefore, his country's guilt, he without regard to the laws of hospitality, which were less regarded by him than the laws of religion, directly slew his guest, and commanded his statues and all his honours to be razed and abolished. Nor was it safe for others to commiserate or bewail so cruel a destiny; but even his companions in arms, whilst they lamented the death of their leader, and filled all places with their complaints, were turned into a kind of swans, which are said, at the approach of their own death, to chaunt sweet melancholy dirges.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable intimates an extraordinary and almost singular thing, for no hero besides Diomed is recorded to have wounded any of the gods. Doubtless, we have here described the nature and fate of a man, who professedly makes any divine worship or sect of religion, though in itself vain and light, the only scope of his actions, and resolves to propagate it by fire and sword. For although the bloody dissentions and differences about religion were unknown to the an-

tients, yet so copious and diffusive was their knowledge, that what they knew not by experience, they comprehended in thought and representation: those, therefore, who endeavour to reform or establish any sect of religion, though vain, corrupt, and infamous (which is here denoted under the person of Venus), not by the force of reason, learning, sanctity of manners, the weight of arguments, and examples; but would spread or extirpate it by persecution, pains, penalties, tortures, fire and sword; may, perhaps, be instigated hereto by Pallas, that is, by a certain rigid, prudential consideration, and a severity of judgment, by the vigour and efficacy whereof, they see thoroughly into the fallacies and fictions of the delusions of this kind; and through aversion to depravity and a well-meant zeal, these men usually for a time, acquire great fame and glory, and are by the vulgar, to whom no moderate measures can be acceptable, extolled, and almost adored, as the only patrons and protectors of truth and religion; men of any other disposition seeming, in comparison with these, to be luke-warm, mean-spirited, and cowardly. This fame and felicity, however, seldom endures to the end; but all violence, *unless it* escapes the reverses and changes of *things by* untimely death, is commonly unpro-

perous in the issue: and if a change of affairs happens, and that sect of religion, which was persecuted and oppressed, gains strength and rises again; then the zeal and warm endeavours of this sort of men are condemned, their very name becomes odious, and all their honours terminate in disgrace.

As to the point that Diomed should be slain by his hospitable entertainer, this denotes that religious dissentions may cause treachery, bloody animosities and deceit, even between the nearest friends.

That complaining or bewailing should not, in so enormous a case, be permitted to friends affected by the catastrophe, without punishment, includes this prudent admonition; that almost in all kinds of wickedness and depravity, men have still room left for commiseration, so that they who hate the crime, may yet pity the person, and bewail his calamity, from a principle of humanity and good-nature; and to forbid the overflowings and intercourses of pity upon such occasions, were the extremest of evils; yet in the cause of religion and impiety, the very commiserations of men are noted and suspected. On the other hand, the lamentations and complainings of the followers and attendants of *Diomed*, that is, of men of the same sect or

persuasion, are usually very sweet, agreeable, and moving, like the dying notes of swans, or the birds of Diomed. This also is a noble and remarkable part of the allegory, denoting, that the last words of those who suffer for the sake of religion, strongly affect and sway mens' minds, and leave a lasting impression upon the sense and memory.*

* See the *de Augment. Scientiar.*

POLITICAL MYTHOLOGY.

I.

THE FABLE OF ACTEON AND PENTHEUS;

EXPLAINED OF CURIOSITY, OR PRYING INTO THE SECRETS OF PRINCES, AND DIVINE MYSTERIES.

THE ancients afford us two examples, for suppressing the impertinent curiosity of mankind, in diving into secrets, and imprudently longing and endeavouring to discover them. The one of these, is in the person of Acteon; and the other, in that of Pentheus. Acteon undesignedly chancing to see Diana naked, was turned into a stag, and torn to pieces by his own hounds. And Pentheus desiring to pry into the hidden mysteries of Bacchus's sacrifice, and climbing a tree for that purpose, was struck with a phrenzy. This phrenzy of Pentheus caused him to see things double, particularly the sun, and his own city Thebes, so that running homewards, and immediately espying another Thebes, he runs towards that; and thus continues incessantly tending first to the one,

and then to the other, without coming at either.

EXPLANATION.

THE first of these fables may relate to the secrets of princes; and the second to divine mysteries. For they who are not intimate with a prince, yet against his will have a knowledge of his secrets, inevitably incur his displeasure: and therefore, being aware that they are singled out, and all opportunities watched against them, they lead the life of a stag, full of fears and suspicions. It likewise frequently happens, that their servants and domestics accuse them, and plot their overthrow, in order to procure favour with the prince: for whenever the king manifests his displeasure, the person it falls upon must expect his servants to betray him, and worry him down, as Acteon was worried by his own dogs.

The punishment of Pentheus is of another kind: for they who, unmindful of their mortal state, rashly aspire to divine mysteries, by climbing the heights of nature and philosophy, here represented by climbing a tree; their fate is perpetual inconstancy, perplexity, and instability *of judgment*. For as there is one light of *nature*, and another light that is divine, they

see, as it were, two suns. And as the actions of life, and the determinations of the will, depend upon the understanding, they are distracted as much in opinion, as in will: and therefore judge very inconsistently, or contradictorily; and see as it were Thebes double: for Thebes being the refuge and habitation of Pentheus, here denotes the ends of actions: whence they know not what course to take, but remaining undetermined and unresolved in their views and designs, they are merely driven about by every sudden gust, and impulse of the mind. *

II.

THE FABLE OF THE GODS SWEARING BY THE RIVER STYX;

EXPLAINED OF NECESSITY, IN THE OATHS OR SOLEMN LEAGUES OF PRINCES.

THE only solemn oath, by which the gods irrevocably obliged themselves, is a well known thing, and makes a part of many ancient fables. To this oath they did not invoke any celestial divinity, or divine attribute, but only called to witness the river Styx; which, with many Meanders, surrounds the infernal court of Dis.

* See *de Augmentis Scientiarum*.

For this form alone, and none but this, was held inviolable and obligatory: and the punishment of falsifying it was, that dreaded one of being excluded, for a certain number of years, the table of the gods.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable seems invented to shew the nature of the compacts and confederacies of princes; which, though ever so solemnly and religiously sworn to, prove but little the more binding for it: so that oaths in this case seem used, rather for decorum, reputation, and ceremony, than for fidelity, security, and effectuating. And though these oaths were strengthened with the bonds of affinity, which are the links and ties of nature, and again, by mutual services and good offices, yet we see all this will generally give way to ambition, convenience, and the thirst of power: the rather, because it is easy for princes, under various, specious pretences to defend, disguise, and conceal their ambitious desires, and insincerity; having no judge to call them to account. There is, however, one true and proper confirmation of their faith, though no celestial divinity; but, that great divinity of princes, *Necessity; or,* the danger of the state, and the *securing of* advantage.

This necessity is elegantly represented by Styx, the fatal river, that can never be crossed back. And this deity it was, which Iphicrates, the Athenian, invoked in making a league: and because he roundly and openly avows what most others studiously conceal, it may be proper to give his own words. Observing, that the Lacedemonians were inventing and proposing a variety of securities, sanctions, and bonds of alliance, he interrupted them thus: "There may indeed, my friends, be one bond and means of security between us; and that is, for you to demonstrate you have delivered into our hands, such things as that if you had the greatest desire to hurt us, you could not be able." Therefore, if the power of offending be taken away, or if by a breach of compact there be danger of destruction or diminution to the state, or tribute, then it is that covenants will be ratified, and confirmed, as it were by the Stygian oath, whilst there remains an impending danger of being prohibited and excluded the banquet of the gods: by which expression the ancients denoted the rights and prerogatives, the affluence and the felicities of empire and dominion. *

* See *de Augmentis Scientiarum.*

III.

THE FABLE OF JUPITER AND METIS;

EXPLAINED OF PRINCES AND THEIR COUNCIL.

THE ancient poets relate that Jupiter took Metis to wife, whose name plainly denotes counsel; and that she being pregnant by him, and he perceiving it, would by no means wait the time of her delivery; but directly devoured her: whence himself also became pregnant, and was delivered in a wonderful manner; for he, from his head or brain, brought forth Pallas armed.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable, which in its literal sense appears monstrously absurd, seems to contain a state secret; and shews with what art kings usually carry themselves towards their counsil, in order to preserve their own authority and majesty, not only inviolate, but so as to have it magnified and heightened among the people. For kings commonly link themselves, as it were in a nuptial bond, to their council, and deliberate and communicate with them after a prudent and laudable custom, upon matters of the greatest *importance;* at the same time, justly conceiving

this no diminution of their majesty: but when the matter once ripens to a decree, or order, which is a kind of birth, the king then suffers the council to go on no further, lest the act should seem to depend upon their pleasure. Now therefore, the king usually assumes to himself whatever was wrought, elaborated, or formed, as it were, in the womb of the council, (unless it be a matter of an invidious nature, which he is sure to put from him) so that the decree and the execution shall seem to flow from himself. And as this decree, or execution, proceeds with prudence, and power, so as to imply necessity, it is elegantly wrapt up under the figure of Pallas armed.

Nor are kings content to have this seem the effect of their own authority, free-will, and uncontrolable choice, unless they also take the whole honour to themselves, and make the people imagine that all good and wholesome decrees proceed entirely from their own head; that is, their own sole prudence and judgment.

IV.

THE FABLE OF ENDYMION;

EXPLAINED OF COURT-FAVOURITES.

THE goddess Luna, is said to have fallen in love with the shepherd Endymion, and to have carried on her amours with him, in a new and singular manner: it being her custom, whilst he lay reposing in a native cave, under Mount Latmus, to descend frequently from her sphere, enjoy his company whilst he slept, and then go up to heaven again. And all this while, Endymion's fortune was no way prejudiced by his unactive and sleepy life; the goddess causing his flocks to thrive, and grow so exceeding numerous, that none of the other shepherds could compare with him.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable seems to describe the tempers and dispositions of princes, who being thoughtful and suspicious, do not easily admit to their privacies such men as are prying, curious, and vigilant, or as it were sleepless; but rather such as are of an easy, obliging nature, and indulge them in their pleasures, without seeking any thing farther: *but seeming* ignorant, insensible, or as it were

lulled asleep before them. Princes usually treat such persons familiarly; and quitting their throne like Luna, think they may with safety unbosom to them. This temper was very remarkable in Tiberius, a prince exceeding difficult to please; and who had no favourites but those that perfectly understood his way, and at the same time, obstinately dissembled their knowledge, almost to a degree of stupidity.

The cave is not improperly mentioned in the fable; it being a common thing for the favourites of a prince to have their pleasant retreats, whither to invite him, by way of relaxation, though without prejudice to their own fortunes: these favourites usually making a good provision for themselves.

For though their prince should not, perhaps, promote them to dignities, yet, out of real affection, and not only for convenience, they generally feel the enriching influence of his bounty.

V.

THE FABLE OF NEMESIS;

EXPLAINED OF THE REVERSES OF FORTUNE.

NEMESIS is represented as a goddess venerated by all; but feared by the powerful and the fortunate. She is said to be the daughter of Nox and Oceanus. She is drawn with wings, and a crown; a javelin of ash in her right hand; a glass containing Ethiopians in her left; and riding upon a stag.

EXPLANATION.

THE fable receives this explanation. The word Nemesis manifestly signifies revenge, or retribution: for the office of this goddess consisted in interposing, like the Roman tribunes, with an 'I forbid it' in all courses of constant and perpetual felicity: so as not only to chastise haughtiness, but also to repay, even innocent and moderate happiness with adversity: as if it were decreed, that none of human race should be admitted to the banquet of the gods, but for sport. And, indeed, to read over that chapter of Pliny, wherein he has collected the miseries and misfortunes of Augustus Cæsar, whom of *all mankind* one would judge most fortunate; as

he had a certain art of using and enjoying prosperity, with a mind no way tumid, light, effeminate, confused, or melancholic; one cannot but think this a very great and powerful goddess, who could bring such a victim to her altar.*

The parents of this goddess were Oceanus and Nox; that is, the fluctuating change of things, and the obscure and secret divine decrees. The changes of things are aptly represented by the ocean, on account of its perpetual ebbing and flowing; and secret providence is justly expressed by night. Even the heathens have observed this secret Nemesis of the night; or the difference betwixt divine and human judgment.†

Wings are given to Nemesis, because of the sudden and unforeseen changes of things; for, from the earliest account of time, it has been common for great and prudent men to fall by the dangers they most despised. Thus Cicero, when admonished by Brutus of the infidelity and rancour of Octavius, coolly wrote back, "I cannot, however, but be obliged to you, Brutus, as I ought, for informing me, though of such a trifle."

Nemesis also has her crown, by reason of the

* As she also brought the author himself.

† "---------- Cadit Ripheus, justissimus unus,
"Qui fuit ex Teucris, & servantissimus æqui;
"*Diis aliter* visum.

invidious and malignant nature of the vulgar, who generally rejoice, triumph, and crown her, at the fall of the fortunate, and the powerful. And for the javelin in her right hand, it has regard to those whom she has actually struck and transfixed. But whoever escapes her stroke, or feels not actual calamity or misfortune, she affrights with a black and dismal sight in her left hand: for doubtless, mortals on the highest pinacle of felicity, have a prospect of death, diseases, calamities, perfidious friends, undermining enemies, reverses of fortune, &c. represented by the Ethiopians in her glass. Thus Virgil, with great elegance, describing the battle of Actium, says of Cleopatra, that, "She did not yet perceive the two asps behind her;" * but soon after, which way soever she turned, she saw whole troops of Ethiopians still before her.

Lastly, it is significantly added, that Nemesis rides upon a stag, which is a very long-lived creature; for though, perhaps, some by an untimely death in youth, may prevent or escape this goddess, yet they who enjoy a long flow of happiness and power, doubtless, become subject to her at length, and are brought to yield.

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* "*Regina in mediis patrio vocat Agmina sistro;*
"*Necdum etiam geminos a tergo respicit angues.*

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VI.

THE FABLE OF CYCLOPS' DEATH;

EXPLAINED OF BASE COURT-OFFICERS.

IT is related that the Cyclops, for their savageness and cruelty, were by Jupiter first thrown into Tartarus, and there condemned to perpetual imprisonment: but that afterwards Tellus persuaded Jupiter it would be for his service to release them, and employ them in forging thunder-bolts. This he accordingly did; and they, with unwearied pains and diligence, hammered out his bolts, and other instruments of terror, with a frightful and continual din of the anvil.

It happened long after, that Jupiter was displeased with Æsculapius, the son of Apollo, for having, by the art of medicine, restored a dead man to life: but concealing his indignation, because the action in itself was pious and illustrious, he secretly incensed the Cyclops against him, who, without remorse, presently slew him with their thunder-bolts: in revenge whereof, Apollo, with Jupiter's connivance, shot them all dead with his arrows.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable seems to point at the behaviour of *princes, who* having cruel, bloody, and oppres-

sive ministers, first punish and displace them; but afterwards, by the advice of Tellus, that is, some earthly-minded and ignoble person, employ them again, to serve a turn, when there is occasion for cruelty in execution, or severity in exaction: but these ministers being base in their nature, whet by their former disgrace, and well aware of what is expected from them, use double diligence in their office; till proceeding unwarily, and over-eager to gain favour, they sometimes from the private nods, and ambiguous orders of their prince, perform some odious or execrable action: When princes, to decline the envy themselves, and knowing they shall never want such tools at their beck, drop them, and give them up to the friends and followers of the injured person; thus exposing them, as sacrifices to revenge and popular odium: whence with great applause, acclamations, and good wishes to the prince, these miscreants at last meet with their desert.

VII.

THE FABLE OF THE GIANTS' SISTER;

EXPLAINED OF PUBLIC DETRACTION.

THE poets relate, that the giants, produced from the earth, made war upon Jupiter, and the other gods; but were repulsed and conquered by thunder: whereat the earth, provoked, brought forth Fame, the youngest sister of the giants, in revenge for the death of her sons.

EXPLANATION.

The meaning of the fable seems to be this: The earth denotes the nature of the vulgar, who are always swelling, and rising against their rulers, and endeavouring at changes. This disposition getting a fit opportunity, breeds rebels and traitors; who, with impetuous rage, threaten and contrive the overthrow and destruction of princes.

And when brought under and subdued, the same vile and restless nature of the people, impatient of peace, produces rumours, detractions, slanders, libels, &c. to blacken those in authority: so that rebellious actions, and seditious rumours differ not in origin and stock, but only as it were in sex; treasons, and rebellions, being the brothers; and scandal, or detraction, the sister.

VIII.

THE FABLE OF TYPHON;

EXPLAINED OF REBELLION.

THE fable runs, that Juno, enraged at Jupiter's bringing forth Pallas without her assistance, incessantly solicited all the gods and goddesses, that she might produce without Jupiter: and having by violence and importunity obtained the grant, she struck the earth, and thence immediately sprung up Typhon, a huge and dreadful monster, whom she committed to the nursing of a serpent. As soon as he was grown up, this monster waged war on Jupiter, and taking him prisoner in the battle, carried him away on his shoulders, into a remote and obscure quarter: and there cutting out the sinews of his hands and feet, he bore them off, leaving Jupiter behind miserably maimed and mangled.

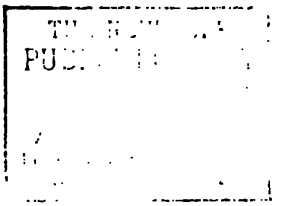
But Mercury afterwards stole these sinews from Typhon, and restored them to Jupiter. Hence, recovering his strength, Jupiter again pursues the monster; first wounds him with a stroke of his thunder, when serpents arose from the blood of the wound: and now the monster being dismayed, and taking to flight, Jupiter *next* darted Mount Ætna upon him, and crush*ed him* with the weight.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable seems designed to express the various fates of kings, and the turns that rebellions sometimes take, in kingdoms. For princes may be justly esteemed married to their states, as Jupiter to Juno: but it sometimes happens, that being depraved by long wielding of the scepter, and growing tyrannical, they would engross all to themselves; and slighting the counsel of their senators and nobles, conceive by themselves; that is, govern according to their own arbitrary will and pleasure. This inflames the people, and makes them endeavour to create and set up some head of their own. Such designs are generally set on foot by the secret motion and instigation of the peers and nobles; under whose connivance the common sort are prepared for rising: whence proceeds a swell in the state, which is appositely denoted by the nursing of Typhon. This growing posture of affairs is fed by the natural depravity, and malignant disposition of the vulgar, which to kings is an envenomed serpent. And now the disaffected uniting their force, at length break out into open rebellion, which, producing infinite mischiefs, both to prince and people, is represented by the horrid and multiplied deformity of Typhon, with

his hundred heads, denoting the divided powers; his flaming mouths, denoting fire and devastation; his girdles of snakes denoting sieges and destruction; his iron hands, slaughter and cruelty; his eagle's talons, rapine and plunder; his plumed body, perpetual rumours, contradictory accounts, &c. And sometimes these rebellions grow so high, that kings are obliged, as if carried on the backs of the rebels, to quit the throne, and retire to some remote and obscure part of their dominions, with the loss of their sinews, both of money and majesty.

But if now they prudently bear this reverse of fortune, they may, in a short time, by the assistance of Mercury, recover their sinews again; that is, by becoming moderate and affable; reconciling the minds and affections of the people to them, by gracious speeches, and prudent proclamations, which will win over the subject chearfully to afford new aids and supplies, and add fresh vigour to authority. But prudent and wary princes here seldom incline to try their fortune by a war, yet do their utmost, by some grand exploit, to crush the reputation of the rebels: and if the attempt succeeds, the rebels, conscious of the wound received, and distrustful of their cause, first betake themselves to broken and empty threats, like the his-



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sings of serpents; and next, when matters are grown desperate, to flight. And now, when they thus begin to shrink, it is safe and seasonable for kings to pursue them with their forces, and the whole strength of the kingdom; thus effectually quashing and suppressing them, as it were by the weight of a mountain.

IX.

THE FABLE OF ACHELOUS;

EXPLAINED OF WAR, BY INVASION.

THE ancients relate, that Hercules and Achelous being rivals in the courtship of Deianira, the matter was contested by single combat: when Achelous having transformed himself, as he had power to do, into various shapes, by way of trial; at length, in the form of a fierce wild bull, prepares himself for the fight: But Hercules still retains his human shape, engages sharply with him, and in the issue broke off one of the bull's horns; and now Achelous in great pain and fright, to redeem his horn, presents Hercules with the cornu-copia.

EXPLANATION.

THIS fable relates to military expeditions and preparations: for the preparation of war on the

defensive side, here denoted by Achelous, appears in various shapes, whilst the invading side has but one simple form; consisting either in an army, or perhaps a fleet. But the country that expects the invasion, is employed infinite ways; in fortifying towns, blockading passes, rivers, and ports; raising soldiers; disposing garrisons; building and breaking down bridges; procuring aids; securing provisions, arms, ammunition, &c. So that there appears a new face of things every day; and at length when the country is sufficiently fortified and prepared, it represents to the life, the form, and threats of a fierce, fighting bull.

On the other side, the invader presses on to the fight, fearing to be distressed in an enemy's country. And if after the battle he remains master of the field, and has now broke, as it were, the horn of his enemy, the besieged, of course, retire inglorious, affrighted, and dismayed, to their strong-hold; there endeavouring to secure themselves, and repair their strength; leaving, at the same time, their country a prey to the conqueror: which is well expressed by the Amalthean horn, or cornu-copia.

X.

THE FABLE OF DÆDALUS;

EXPLAINED OF ARTS AND ARTISTS IN KINGDOMS AND STATES.

THE ancients have left us a description of mechanical skill, industry, and curious arts converted to ill uses, in the person of Dædalus; a most ingenious but execrable artist. This Dædalus was banished for the murder of his brother artist, and rival; yet found a kind reception in his banishment, from the kings and states where he came. He raised many incomparable edifices to the honour of the gods, and invented many new contrivances for the beautifying and ennobling of cities and public places; but still he was most famous for wicked inventions. Among the rest he contrived the engine for satisfying the monstrous lust of Pasiphae with a bull; wherein, by his abominable industry and destructive genius, he assisted to the fatal and infamous production of the monster Minotaur; that devourer of promising youths. And then, to cover one mischief with another, and provide for the security of this monster, he invented and built a labyrinth; a work infamous for its end and design, but admirable and prodigious for art and

workmanship. After this, that he might not only be celebrated for wicked inventions, but be sought after, as well for prevention, as for instruments of mischief, he formed that ingenious device of his clue, which led directly through all the windings of the labyrinth. This Dædalus was persecuted by Minos, with the utmost severity, diligence, and enquiry; but he always found refuge and means of escaping. Lastly, endeavouring to teach his son, Icarus, the art of flying, the novice trusting too much to his wings, fell from his towering flight and was drowned in the sea.

EXPLANATION.

THE sense of the fable runs thus. It first denotes envy; which is continually upon the watch, and strangely prevails among excellent artificers; for no kind of people are observed to be more implacably and destructively envious to one another than these.

In the next place, it observes an impolitic and improvident kind of punishment inflicted upon Dædalus, that of banishment; for good workmen are gladly received every where: so that banishment to an excellent artificer, is scarce *any punishment* at all; whereas other conditions

of life cannot easily flourish from home. For the admiration of artists is propagated and increased among foreigners and strangers; it being a principle in the minds of men, to slight and despise the mechanical operators of their own nation.

The succeeding part of the fable is plain, concerning the use of mechanic arts, whereto human life stands greatly indebted; as receiving from this treasury numerous particulars for the service of religion, the ornament of civil society, and the whole provision and apparatus of life; but then the same magazine supplies instruments of lust, cruelty, and death. For, not to mention the arts of luxury and debauchery, we plainly see how far the business of exquisite poisons, guns, engines of war, and such kind of destructive inventions, exceeds the cruelty and barbarity of the minotaur himself.

The addition of the labyrinth contains a beautiful allegory, representing the nature of mechanic arts in general: for all ingenious and accurate mechanical inventions may be conceived as a labyrinth, which, by reason of their subtilty, intricacy, crossing, and interfering with one another, and the apparent resemblances they have among themselves, scarce any power of the judgment can unravel and distinguish; so that

they are only to be understood and traced by the clue of experience.*

It is no less prudently added, that he who invented the windings of the labyrinth, should also shew the use and management of the clue: for mechanical arts have an ambiguous or double use; and serve as well to produce as to prevent mischief and destruction; so that their virtue almost destroys or unwinds itself.

Unlawful arts, and indeed frequently arts themselves, are persecuted by Minos, that is, by laws, which prohibit and forbid their use among the people: but notwithstanding this, they are hid, concealed, retained, and every where find reception and sculking-places; a thing well observed by Tacitus of the astrologers and fortune-tellers of his time. "These," says he, "are a kind of men that will always be prohibited, and yet will always be retained in our city.

But lastly, all unlawful and vain arts, of what kind soever, lose their reputation in tract of time; grow contemptible and perish, through their over-confidence, like Icarus, being commonly unable to perform what they boasted.

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* In this light we are to consider all the furniture and *apparatus of Shops*, Warehouses, and Magazines.

And to say the truth, such arts are better suppressed by their own vain pretensions, than checked or restrained by the bridle of laws.*

THE FABLE OF PAN.

EXPLAINED OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

THE ancients have with great exactness, delineated universal nature, under the person of Pan. They leave his origin doubtful: some asserting him the son of Mercury; and others the common offspring of all Penelope's suitors. The latter supposition doubtless occasioned some later writers to entitle this ancient fable, Penelope: a thing frequently practised, when the earlier relations are applied to more modern characters and persons; though sometimes with great absurdity and ignorance; as in the present case: for Pan was one of the ancientest gods,

* The author's Essays are writings nearly of the same kind with the present, though more reserved, and guarded. Indeed he seems scarce any where to speak his sentiments with so great freedom and perspicuity, as under the pretext or intention of explaining these ancient fables: for which reason, this piece may deserve to be the more read, by such as desire to understand the rest of his works.

and long before the time of Ulysses: besides, Penelope was venerated by antiquity for her matronal chastity. A third sort will have him the issue of Jupiter and Hybris, that is reproach. But whatever his origin was, the destinies are allowed his sisters.

He is described by antiquity with pyramidal horns, reaching up to heaven, a rough and shaggy body, a very long beard, of a biform figure, human above, half brute below, ending in goat's feet. His arms, or ensigns of power, are, a pipe in his left hand, composed of seven reeds; in his right a crook; and he wore for his mantle a leopard's skin.

His attributes and titles were, the god of hunters, shepherds, and all the rural inhabitants; president of the mountains; and after Mercury the next messenger of the gods. He was also held the leader and ruler of the nymphs, who continually danced and frisked about him, attended with the Satyrs, and their elders the Sileni. He had also the power of striking terrors, especially such as were vain and superstitious: whence they came to be called panic terrors.

Few actions are recorded of him, only a principal one is, that he challenged Cupid at wrestling, and was worsted. He also catched the giant Typhon in a net, and held him fast. They

relate farther of him, that when Ceres growing disconsolate for the rape of Proserpine, hid herself, and all the gods took the utmost pains to find her, by going out different ways for that purpose, Pan, only had the good fortune to meet her, as he was hunting, and discovered her to the rest. He likewise had the assurance to rival Apollo in music; and in the judgment of Midas was preferred; but the judge had, though with great privacy and secrecy, a pair of asses ears fastened on him for his sentence.

There is very little said of his amours; which may seem strange among such a multitude of gods, so profusely amorous. He is only reported to have been very fond of Echo, who was also esteemed his wife; and one nymph more, called Syrinx, with the love of whom Cupid inflamed him for his insolent challenge.

Lastly, Pan had no descendant; which also is a wonder, when the male gods were so extremely prolific; only he was the reputed father of a servant girl, called Iambe, who used to divert strangers with her ridiculous prattling stories.

This fable is perhaps the noblest of all antiquity; and pregnant with the mysteries and secrets of nature. Pan, as the name imports, represents the universe, about whose origin there are two opinions, viz; that it either sprung from

Mercury, that is, the divine word, according to the scriptures, and philosophical divines: or from the confused seeds of things. For they who allow only one beginning of all things, either ascribe it to God; or if they suppose a material beginning, acknowledge it to be various in its powers; so that the whole dispute comes to these two points, viz. either that nature proceeds from Mercury, or from confused mixture, according to the fable.*

The third origin of Pan seems borrowed by the Greeks from the Hebrew mysteries, either by means of the Egyptians, or otherwise; for it relates to the state of the world, not in its first creation, but as made subject to death and corruption after the fall: and in this state it was, and remains the offspring of God and sin, or Jupiter and reproach. And therefore these three several accounts of Pan's birth may seem true, if duly distinguished in respect of things and times. For this Pan, or the universal nature of things, which we view and contemplate, had its origin from the divine word, and confused matter, first created by God himself; with

* Namque canebat uti magnum per inana coacta
Semina terrarumque animæque marisque fuissent;
Et liquidi simul ignis; & his exordia primis
Omnia, & ipse tener mundi concreverit orbis

the subsequent introduction of sin, and consequently corruption.

The destinies, or the natures and fates of things, are justly made Pan's sisters; as the chain of natural causes links together the rise, duration, and corruption; the exaltation, degeneration, and workings; the processes, the effects, and changes, of all that can any way happen to things.

Horns are given him, broad at the roots, but narrow and sharp a-top, because the nature of all things seem pyramidal: for individuals are infinite; but being collected into a variety of species, they rise up into kinds; and these again ascend, and are contracted into generals; till at length nature may seem collected to a point. And no wonder if Pan's horns reach to the heavens, since the sublimities of nature, or abstract ideas, reach in a manner to things divine: for there is a short and ready passage from metaphysics to natural theology.

Pan's body, or the body of nature, is, with great propriety and elegance, painted shaggy and hairy; as representing the rays of things: for rays are as the hair, or fleece of nature; and more or less worn by all bodies. This evidently appears in vision; and in all effects or operations at a distance: for whatever operates thus,

may be properly said to emit rays.* But particularly the beard of Pan is exceeding long; because the rays of the celestial bodies penetrate and act to a prodigious distance: and the sun himself, when clouded on its upper part, appears to the eye bearded.

Again, the body of nature is justly described biform, because of the difference between its superior or inferior parts; as the former, for their beauty, regularity of motion, and influence over the earth, may be properly represented by the human figure; and the latter, because of their disorder, irregularity, and subjection to the celestial bodies, are by the brutal. This biform figure also represents the participation of one species with another; for there appear to be no simple natures; but all participate or consist of two: thus man has somewhat of the brute, the brute somewhat of the plant, the plant somewhat of the mineral; so that all natural bodies have really two faces; or consist of a superior and an inferior species.

* This is always supposed the case in vision; so that the mathematical demonstrations in optics, proceeded upon it. And hence we may the better understand the meaning of the author, when he mentions as he frequently does, the rays of things.

There lies a curious allegory in the making of Pan goat-footed; on account of the motion of ascent which the terrestrial bodies have towards the air and heavens: for the goat is a clambering creature, that delights in climbing up rocks and precipices: and in the same manner, the matters destined to this lower globe strongly affect to rise upwards; as appears from the clouds and meteors.

Pan's arms, or the ensigns he bears in his hands, are of two kinds; the one an emblem of harmony, the other of empire. His pipe, composed of seven reeds, plainly denotes the consent and harmony, or the concords and discords of things, produced by the motion of the seven planets. His crook also contains a fine representation of the ways of nature; which are partly strait, and partly crooked: thus the staff having an extraordinary bend towards the top, denotes, that the works of divine Providence are generally brought about by remote means, or in a circuit; as if somewhat else were intended, rather than the effect produced, as in the sending of Joseph into Egypt, &c. So likewise in human government, they who sit at the helm, manage and wind the people more successfully, by pretext and oblique courses, than they could by such as are direct and strait; so that in effect all sceptres are crooked a-top.

Pan's mantle, or cloathing, is with great ingenuity made of a leopard's skin; because of the spots it has: for, in like manner, the heavens are sprinkled with stars, the sea with islands, the earth with flowers, and almost each particular thing is variegated, or wears a mottled coat.

The office of Pan could not be more lively expressed, than by making him the god of hunters: for every natural action, every motion and process, is no other than a chace: thus arts and sciences hunt out their works; and human schemes and counsels, their several ends: and all living creatures either hunt out their aliment, pursue their prey, or seek their pleasures; and this in a skilful and sagacious manner. He is also stiled the God of the rural inhabitants; because men in this situation live more according to nature, than they do in cities and courts; which corrupt them with effeminate arts. He is likewise particularly stiled President of the mountains, because in mountains and lofty places, the nature of things lies more open and exposed to the eye and the understanding.*

In his being called the messenger of the gods,

* Particularly the meteors and celestial bodies; whence observatories for astronomy, meteorology, &c. See the author's New Atlantis.

next after Mercury, lies a divine allegory; as, next after the word of God, the image of the world is the herald of the divine power and wisdom; according to the expression of the Psalmist: "The heavens declare the glory of God, "and the firmament sheweth his handy-works."

Pan is delighted with the company of the nymphs; that is, the souls of all living creatures are the delight of the world; and he is properly called their governor, because each of them follows its own nature as a leader; and all dance about their own respective rings, with infinite variety, and never-ceasing motion. And with these continually join the Satyrs and Sileni, that is, Youth and Age; for all things have a kind of young, chearful, and dancing time; and again their time of slowness, tottering, and creeping. And whoever, in a true light considers the motions and endeavours of both these ages, like another Democritus, will perhaps find them as odd and strange, as the gesticulations and antic motions of the Satyrs and Sileni.

The power he had of striking terrors, contains a very sensible doctrine; for nature has implanted fear in all living creatures; as well to keep them from risquing their lives, as to guard against injuries and violence: and yet this nature, or passion keeps not its bounds; but with just and profitable fears always mixes such as are vain

and senseless; so that all things, if we could see their insides, would appear full of panic terrors. Thus mankind, particularly the vulgar, labour under a high degree of superstition; which is nothing more than a panic dread that principally reigns in unsettled and troublesome times.

The presumption of Pan, in challenging Cupid to the conflict, denotes that matter has an appesite, and tendency to a dissolution of the world; and falling back to its first chaos again; unless this depravity and inclination were restrained and subdued by a more powerful concord and agreement of things, properly expressed by love or Cupid: it is therefore well for mankind, and the state of all things, that Pan was thrown and conquered in the struggle.*

His catching and detaining Typhon in the net, requires a similar explanation; for whatever vast and unusual swells, which the word Typhon signifies, may sometimes be raised in nature, as

* These kind of explanations may appear like forced accommodations, to hasty and juvenile minds: but perhaps will have a greater effect upon sober and philosophical natures, versed in the knowledge of men and things. It certainly requires a knowledge of history, depth in philosophy, and a mature judgment, to discover the origin, the intention, and use of the ancient mythology. See the author's Critique upon the subject, prefixed to the Sapientia Veterum.

in the sea, the clouds, the earth, or the like; yet nature catches, entangles, and holds all such outrages and insurrections in her inextricable net, wove as it were of adamant.

That part of the fable, which attributes the discovery of lost Ceres to Pan, whilst he was hunting; a happiness denied the other gods, though they diligently and expressly sought her, contains an exceeding just and prudent admonition; viz. that we are not to expect the discovery of things useful in common life, as that of corn denoted by Ceres, from abstract philosophies; as if these were the gods of the first order; no, not though you used your utmost endeavours this way; but only from Pan, that is a sagacious experience and general knowledge of nature; which is often found, even by accident, to stumble upon such discoveries, whilst the pursuit was directed another way.

The event of his contending with Apollo in music, affords us an useful instruction, that may help to humble the human reason and judgment, which is too apt to boast, and glory in itself. There seems to be two kinds of harmony; the one of divine Providence, the other of human reason: but the government of the world, the administration of its affairs, and the more secret divine judgments, sound harsh and dissonant to human ears, or human judgment; and though

this ignorance be justly rewarded with asses ears; yet they are put on and wore, not openly, but with great secrecy: nor is the deformity of the thing seen or observed by the vulgar.

We must not find it strange if no amours are related of Pan, besides his marriage with Echo: for nature enjoys itself, and in itself all other things: he that loves, desires enjoyment; but in profusion there is no room for desire: and therefore Pan, remaining content with himself, has no passion, unless it be for discourse, which is well shadowed out by Echo, or talk; or when it is more accurate, by Syrinx, or writing.* But Echo makes a most excellent wife for Pan, as being no other than genuine philosophy, which faithfully repeats his words: or only transcribes exactly as nature dictates; thus representing the true image and reflection of the world, without adding a tittle.†

It tends also to the support and perfection of Pan or nature, to be without offspring; for the world generates in its parts, and not in the way

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* Observe that Syrinx, fignifies a reed, or the ancient pen.

† The author always endeavours to place himself in this situation, and accordingly calls himself, and is called by others, the secretary of nature. See Sir Henry Wotton's Letter to the Lord Bacon, in the Reliquiæ Wottonianiæ.

of a whole; as wanting a body external to itself, wherewith to generate.

Lastly, for the supposed or spurious prattling daughter of Pan, it is an excellent addition to the fable, and aptly represents the talkative philosophies that have at all times been stirring, and filled the world with idle tales: being ever barren, empty, and servile; though sometimes indeed diverting and entertaining; and sometimes again, troublesome and importunate.*

THE FABLE OF PERSEUS.

EXPLAINED OF THE PREPARATION AND CONDUCT NECESSARY TO WAR.

THE fable relates, that Perseus was dispatched from the east by Pallas, to cut off Medusa's head, who had committed great ravage upon the people of the west: for this Medusa was so dire a monster, as to turn into stone all those who but looked upon her. She was a Gorgon, and

* After reading the explanation, it may be proper to read the fable again; which makes the conformity appear so great, that one can scarce help believing, or at least wishing, the things drawn out of it by the author, were originally intended by the contriver. But of this, in general, see more in the Critique prefixed.

the only mortal one of the three; the other two being invulnerable. Perseus therefore preparing himself for this grand enterprize, had presents made him from three of the gods: Mercury gave him wings for his heels; Pluto, a helmet; and Pallas a shield and a mirror. But though he was now so well equipped, he posted not directly to Medusa, but first turned aside to the Greæ, who were half-sisters to the Gorgons. These Greæ were grey-headed, and like old women from their birth; having among them all three but one eye, and one tooth; which, as they had occasion to go out, they each wore by turns; and laid them down again upon coming back. This eye and this tooth they lent to Perseus; who now judging himself sufficiently furnished, he, without farther stop, flies swiftly away to Medusa; and finds her asleep. But not venturing his eyes, for fear she should awake, he turned his head aside, and viewed her in Pallas's mirror: and thus directing his stroke, cut off her head: when immediately, from the gushing blood, there darted Pegasus winged. Perseus now inserted Medusa's head into Pallas's shield: which thence retained the faculty of astonishing and benumbing all who looked on it.

This fable seems invented to shew the prudent method of chusing, undertaking, and conducting

a war; and accordingly lays down three useful precepts about it, as if they were the precepts of Pallas.

The first is, that no prince should be over-solicitous to subdue a neighbouring nation: for the method of enlarging an empire, is very different from that of increasing an estate. Regard is justly had to contiguity, or adjacency, in private lands and possessions; but in the extending of empire, the occasion, the facility, and advantage of a war, are to be regarded instead of vicinity. It is certain that the Romans, at the time they stretched but little beyond Liguria to the west, had by their arms subdued the provinces as far as Mount Taurus to the east. And thus Perseus readily undertook a very long expedition even from the east to the extremities of the west.

The second precept is, that the cause of the war be just and honourable; for this adds alacrity both to the soldiers and the people who find the supplies: procures aids, alliances, and numerous other conveniencies. Now there is no cause of war more just and laudable, than the suppressing of tyranny; by which a people are dispirited, benumbed, or left without life and vigour, as at the sight of Medusa.

Lastly, it is prudently added, that as there were three of the Gorgons, who represent war,

Perseus singled her out for his expedition that was mortal: which affords this precept, that such kind of wars should be chose, as may be brought to a conclusion, without pursuing vast and infinite hopes.

Again, Perseus's setting out is extremely well adapted to his undertaking; and in a manner commands success: he received dispatch from Mercury, secrecy from Pluto, and foresight from Pallas. It also contains an excellent allegory, that the wings given him by Mercury were for his heels, not for his shoulders; because expedition is not so much required in the first preparations for war, as in the subsequent matters, that administer to the first; for there is no error more frequent in war, than, after brisk preparations, to halt for subsidiary forces, and effective supplies.

The allegory of Pluto's helmet, rendering men invisible and secret, is sufficiently evident of itself: but the mystery of the shield and the mirror lies deeper: and denotes, that not only a prudent caution must be had to defend, like the shield; but also such an address and penetration, as may discover the strength, the motions, the counsels, and designs of the enemy; like the mirror of Pallas.

But though Perseus may now seem extremely well prepared, there still remains the most im-

portant thing of all: before he enters upon the war, he must of necessity consult the Greæ. These Greæ are treasons; half, but degenerate sisters of the Gorgans; who are representatives of wars: for wars are generous and noble: but treasons base and vile. The Greæ are elegantly described, as hoary-headed, and like old women from their birth; on account of the perpetual cares, fears, and trepidations attending traitors. Their force also, before it breaks out in open revolt, consists either of an eye or a tooth; for all faction alienated from a state, is both watchful and biting: and this eye and tooth is, as it were common to all the disaffected; because whatever they learn and know, is transmitted from one to another, as by the hands of faction. And for the tooth, they all bite with the same; and clamour with one throat; so that each of them singly expresses the multitude.

These Greæ, therefore must be prevailed upon by Perseus, to lend him their eye and their tooth; the eye to give him indications, and make discoveries; the tooth for sowing rumours, raising envy, and stirring up the minds of the people. And when all these things are thus disposed and prepared, then follows the action of the war.

He finds Medusa asleep: for whoever undertakes a war with prudence, generally falls upon

the enemy unprepared, and nearly in a state of security; and here is the occasion for Pallas's mirror: for it is common enough, before the danger presents, to see exactly into the state and posture of the enemy; but the principal use of the glass is, in the very instant of danger, to discover the manner thereof, and prevent consternation; which is the thing intended by Perseus's turning his head aside, and viewing the enemy in the glass.*

Two effects here follow the conquest: 1. the darting forth of Pegasus; which evidently denotes fame, that flies abroad, proclaiming the victory far and near. 2. The bearing of Medusa's head in the shield; which is the greatest possible defence and safeguard: for one grand and memorable enterprize, happily accomplished, bridles all the motions and attempts of the enemy, stupefies disaffection, and quells commotions.†

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* Thus it is the excellence of a general, early to discover what turn the battle is likely to take: and looking prudently behind, as well as before, to pursue a victory so as not to be unprovided for a retreat.

† It may be observed of the explanation of these fables, the author does not explain them in the way of a recluse; but as a man who had been conversant in action, and knew the nature, secrets, and springs of public, as well as private *transactions*.

THE FABLE OF DIONYSUS, OR BACCHUS.

EXPLAINED OF THE PASSIONS.

THE fable runs, that Semele, Jupiter's mistress, having bound him by an inviolable oath to grant her an unknown request, desired he would embrace her in the same form and manner he used to embrace Juno: and the promise being irrevocable,* she was burnt to death with lightning in the performance. The embryo, however, was sewed up, and carried in Jupiter's thigh, till the complete time of its birth: but the burthen thus rendering the father lame, and giving him pain, the child was thence called Dionysus.† When born, he was committed, for some years, to be nursed by Proserpina; and when grown up, appeared with such an effeminate face, that his sex seemed somewhat doubtful. He also died, and was buried for a time; but afterwards revived. When a youth, he first introduced the cultivation and dressing of vines; the method of preparing wine; and taught the

* The word has several significations, according to its different derivations; but among the rest, it denotes pungent pain,

use thereof: whence becoming famous, he subdued the world, even to the utmost bounds of the Indies. He rode in a chariot drawn by tygers. There danced about him certain deformed dæmons called Cobali, &c. The muses also joined in his train. He married Ariadne, who was deserted by Theseus. The ivy was sacred to him. He was also held the inventor and institutor of religious rites and ceremonies; but such as were wild, frantic, and full of corruption and cruelty. He had also the power of striking men with frenzies. Pentheus and Orpheus were torn to pieces by the frantic women at his orgies: the first for climbing a tree to behold their outrageous ceremonies, and the other for the music of his harp. But the acts of this god are much entangled and confounded with those of Jupiter.

This fable seems to contain a little system of morality; so that there is scarce any better invention in all ethics. Under the history of Bacchus is drawn the nature of unlawful desire or affection, and disorder; for the appetite and thirst of apparent good is the mother of all unlawful desire, though ever so destructive; and all unlawful desires are conceived in unlawful wishes or requests, rashly indulged or granted before they are well understood or considered, and when the affection begins to grow warm, the

mother of it (the nature of good) is destroyed and burnt up by the heat. And whilst an unlawful desire lies in the embryo, or unripened in the mind, which is its father, and here represented by Jupiter, it is cherished and concealed, especially in the inferior part of the mind, corresponding to the thigh of the body, where pain twitches and depresses the mind so far as to render its resolutions and actions imperfect and lame. And even after this child of the mind is confirmed, and gains strength by consent and habit, and comes forth into action, it must still be nursed by Proserpina for a time: that is, it skulks and hides its head in a clandestine manner, as it were under ground, till at length, when the checks of shame and fear are removed; and the requisite boldness acquired, it either assumes the pretext of some virtue, or openly despises infamy. And it is justly observed, that every vehement passion appears of a doubtful sex, as having the strength of a man at first, but at last the impotence of a woman. It is also excellently added, that Bacchus died and rose again; for the affections sometimes seem to die and be no more; but there is no trusting them, even though they were buried, being always apt and ready to rise again whenever the occasion or object offers.

That Bacchus should be the inventor of wine carries a fine allegory with it; for every affection is cunning and subtile in discovering a pro-

per matter to nourish and feed it; and of all things known to mortals, wine is the most powerful and effectual for exciting and inflaming passions of all kinds, being indeed like a common fewel to them all.

It is again with great elegance observed of Bacchus, that he subdued provinces, and undertook endless expeditions; for the affections never rest satisfied with what they enjoy, but, with an endless and insatiable appetite, thirst after somewhat further. And tygers are prettily feigned to draw the chariot; for as soon as any affection shall, from going on foot, be advanced to ride, it triumphs over reason, and exerts its cruelty, fierceness, and strength against all that oppose it.

It has also humorously imagined, that ridiculons dæmons should dance and frisk about this chariot; for every passion produces indecent, disorderly, interchangeable, and deformed motions in the eyes, countenance, and gesture; so that the person under the impulse, whether of anger, insult, love, &c. though to himself he may seem grand, lofty, or obliging, yet in the eyes of others appears mean, contemptible, or ridiculous.

The muses also are found in the train of Bacchus; for there is scarce any passion without its *art, science,* or doctrine to court and flatter it; *but in this* respect the indulgence of men of ge-

nius has greatly detracted from the majesty of the muses, who ought to be the leaders and conductors of human life, and not the handmaids of the passions.

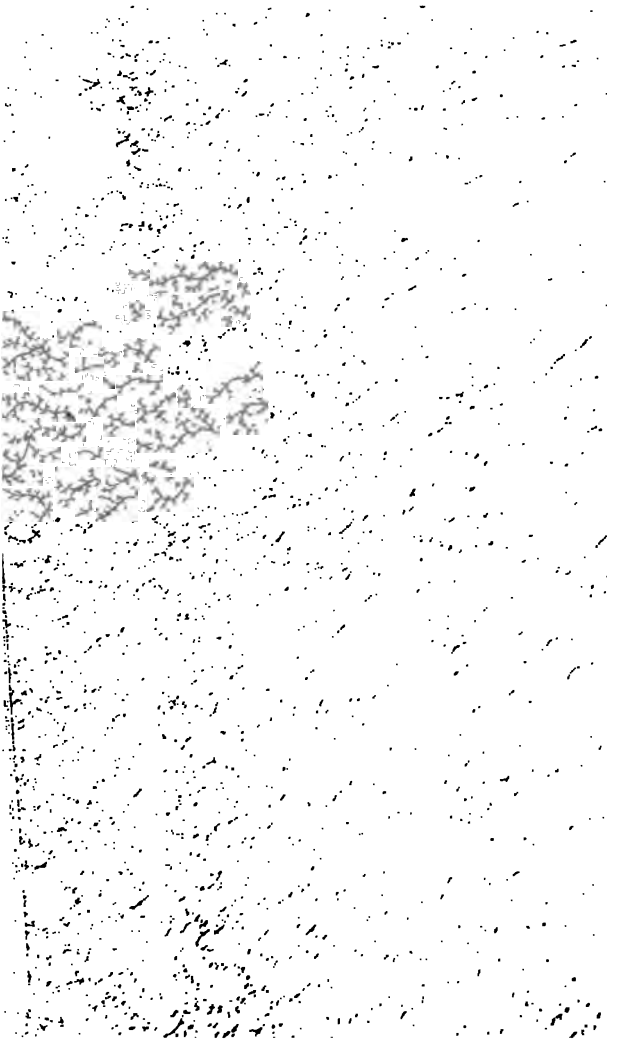
The allegory of Bacchus falling in love with a cast mistress, is extremely noble; for it is certain that the affections always court and covet what has been rejected upon experience. And all those who by serving and indulging their passions immediately raise the value of enjoyment, should know, that whatever they covet and pursue, whether riches, pleasure, glory, learning, or any thing else, they only pursue those things that have been forsaken, and cast off with contempt, by great numbers in all ages, after possession and experience had of them.

Nor is it without a mystery that the ivy was sacred to Bacchus, and this for two reasons; first, because ivy is an evergreen, or flourishes in the winter; and secondly, because it winds and creeps about so many things, as trees, walls, and buildings, and raises itself above them. As to the first, every passion grows fresh, strong, and vigorous by opposition and prohibition, as it were by a kind of contrast or antiperistasis, like the ivy in the winter. And for the second, the predominant passion of the mind throws itself like the ivy, round all human actions, entwines all our resolutions, and perpetually ad-

heres to, and mixes itself in among, or even overtops them.

And no wonder that superstitious rites and ceremonies are attributed to Bacchus, when almost every ungovernable passion grows wanton and luxuriant in corrupt religions; nor again, that fury and frenzy should be sent and dealt out by him, because every passion is a short frenzy; and if it be vehement, lasting, and take deep root, it terminates in madness. And hence the allegory of Pentheus and Orpheus being torn to pieces is evident; for every headstrong passion is extremely bitter, severe, inveterate, and revengeful upon all curious enquiry, wholesome admonition, free counsel and persuasion.

Lastly, the confusion between the persons of Jupiter and Bacchus will justly admit of an allegory, because noble and meritorious actions may sometimes proceed from virtue, sound reason, and magnanimity, and sometimes again from a concealed passion and secret desire of ill, however they may be extolled and praised; insomuch that it is not easy to distinguish betwixt the acts of Bacchus and the acts of Jupiter.

THE END.

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